

UCT
Mountain and Ski
Club

Journal
1996

PETZL

**first
Ascent**



simond
CHAMONIX - FRANCE

**Back
packer**

boreal

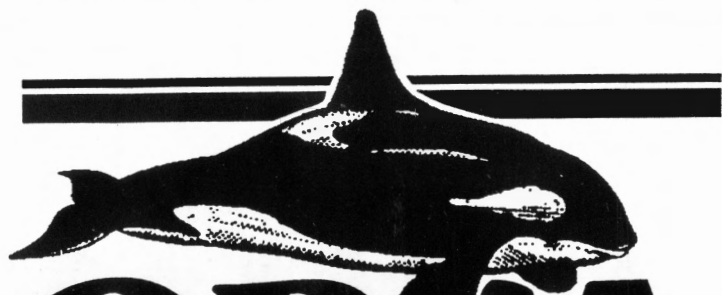
BLACK DIAMOND

KARRIMOR

MAXIM
CLIMBING ROPE

POLARTEC

**WILD
COUNTRY**



ORCA INDUSTRIES

CLIMBING HIKING DIVING

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

The largest selection in Cape Town

HIKING & TREKKING EQUIPMENT

The best of local and
imported gear

SOUND ADVICE

We practice what we preach

QUALITY TUITION

Rock climbing & mountain
leadership courses.
MCSA syllabus

BOLTING

HILTI DRILL FOR HIRE
all accessories
available

BEST PRICES
-guaranteed!

**MAIL ORDER
AVAILABLE**

3 BOWWOOD RD • CLAREMONT • CAPE TOWN
TEL: (021) 619673 OR 619679 FAX: (021) 619733

WE OFFER MORE...!

UCTMSC COMMITTEE-1995/6

PRESIDENT:

John Moss

CHAIRPERSON (VICE PRESIDENT):

Roger Diamond

ZUURBERG CONVEROR

Andrew Lewis

CONSERVATION CONVENOR:

Conrad Vermeulen

HUTS CONVENOR:

Celeste Cullen

SKIING CONVENOR:

James Cullis

HIKES CONVENOR:

Rebecca Gray

CLIMBS CONVENOR:

Andrew Ross-Innes

CLIMBING WALLS CONVENOR:

Graham Shillington

EQUIPMENT OFFICER:

Rod Finn

TREASURER:

Jeremy Wakeford

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER:

Paul Leroy

SOCIALS CONVENOR:

Ernest Fratzak

BARPERSON:

Ray Greenwood

SECRETARY AND LIBRARIAN:

Nina Veenstra

JOURNAL EDITORS:

Jenny Greenwood and Tessa Dicey (Fresher's Booklet)

Jenny Greenwood (Journal)

CONTENTS

CLIMBS

Beginner's Rock	
Climbing Meet	p29
Silvermine Rock Climbing	p32
Not Quite Climbing	
at the Mine	p32
The President's Rock Meet	p41
Competition Climbing	p66

EDITORIAL

p3

EXOTIC DESTINATIONS

Summit of the Americas	p23
Cedarberg Hike	p34
All Aboard the Tsitsikamma	
Trail	p43
Drakensberg	Group 1 p47
	Group 2 p49
Transkei Hike	p52

SOCIAL SCENE

Hoare Hut's	
25th Birthday Party	p39
A Rough Guide to	
the Social Scene	p64

CREATIVE INPUT AND EXTRA'S

Happy Hacking	p44
Alasdair's Decadent Double	
Chocolate Brownies	p16
Mountain and Ski	
Outs and Ins	p24
Queen Poem	p67

REPORTS

Chairperson's Report	p 5
Treasurer's Report	p10
Zuurberg	p13



Cover photo: Ross MacDonald, Credit: Roger Diamond

Rambling in the Cape

Bailey's Peak 1995	p15
Bailey's Peak 1996	p15
Elephant's Eye Cave Fresher's Walk	p17
Tranquillity Cracks Hike	p17
Fresh Hike	p18
Fresher's Hike: Cold Night, Warm Spirit in the Witels	p19
Underground, Overground, Wombeling Free	p22
Mountain Club Walk in the Helderberg	p25
Du Toits Peak Via Yellowwood Amphitheatre	p26
The Magical Mountain Goat Tour	p27
Aaaaaaargh! Splash! - Suicide	p28
Chapman's Peak Day Hike	p36
Conquering Karbonkelberg	p37
Jonkershoek	p38
The Hut Behind the Flat Mountain	p53
Who Needs the Alps?	p55
Nursery Buttress to the Back Table	p57
The Cutting Edge of the Witels	p58
Table Mountain Three Peak Challenge 1995	p59
Three Peaks Challenge 1996	p59
Table Mountain Hike	p61
Lions Head Sundowners & Moonuppers	p62
Bloupunt Trail Weekend	p62
The Storming of Baboon Peak	p65

EDITORIAL

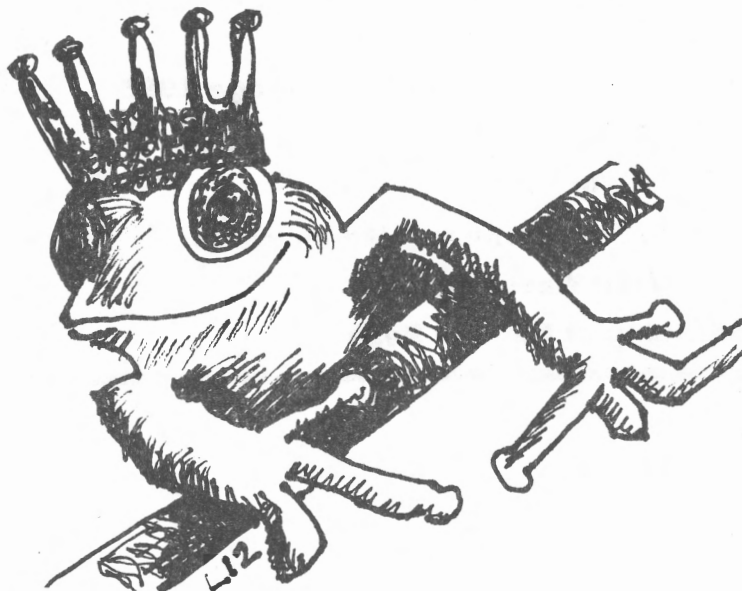
If 1996 came and went faster than you could say 'pasta and sauce', you experienced the very same trepidation that I endured as the deadline for this magazine loomed closer. Handing the journal to the printers will bring one regret - I shall miss the invaluable companionship and the organisational gusto of our Club.

I cannot resist a brief input of philosophy at this point, especially as I have the pleasure of an entire empty page at my fingertips. The subject is the 'controversial' issue that tends to dampen any conversation, or to the other extreme, send the male participants into fits of laughter and old jokes. I am generally of the old school when it comes to feminism and stand alongside Virginia Woolf who prefers not to call equal opportunity for women 'feminism', as it has gathered a reputation of disproportional size along with its name, like a pine hacker's leg gathers scratches on virgin fynbos. The reason I choose to discuss the issue which is as old, hard and dry as the dehydrated milk that one finds at the bottom of the milk tins at Hoare Hut, is that in spite of its antiquity, the gender issue continues to prosper in the big world and in our microcosm of the university MSC.

Editing the articles submitted this year, I noticed a repeated reference to the fairer sex. The presence of women on hikes is most definitely a priority to any male leader or hiker. I quote "... the lack of the feminine presence caused much distress and definitely had an affect on the quality (not to mention the quantity) of the hike ...". When women were present on any hike, this factor was noted with a sense of incredible victory and triumph by the writer. Yet, these very same men have a tendency to diplomatically yet sternly (we must be stern with our women, you know) exclude women when it comes to a challenging or more difficult mountain to conquer or pine to hack.

Now we are speaking of the exception, rather than the rule, yet the exception is valid because it has a large enough presence for the complaint to be viable amongst the women of the Club. Men, the summit of it is that all you have to do to increase the number of women on club meets is to **welcome** those who lack only the ability to grow beards and back hair and who otherwise succeed in as many spheres as yourselves.

If you have been noble enough to reach this point, congratulations. I trust that in future we will be seeing many more women on our challenging hikes and hacks!!



In contrast to the prejudiced, there are those angelic souls that have been most supportive throughout the year of journal production and who definitely deserve mentioning. I would like to thank Pierre (Homer) Hoffa for his continued support. Here is one Engineer that fails to display a prejudice of any sort. Pierre is an excellent and valued mentor and has taught me to appreciate and respect the mountains for their dynamic beauty. Thank you to my flat mate Craig Adam who prevented me from hurling myself and the computer three stories out of the window as I wrestled with the vagaries of the computer and journal. Thanks to my Mum and Nina Veenstra who showed me that typing 50 wpm has far more desirable results than my sturdy, yet tediously slow 10 wpm. Thanks also to those committee members who were so keen to see the journal completed that they put aside theses - (thanks Roger for your 'AACTIOON') and other tasks to assist me in its completion. All those creative writers, your contributions are what make this magazine - thanking you. Elijane de Vries looks forward to your generous 1997 journal input. Lastly and definitely not least, I would like to thank Ryan Hill for his invaluable assistance and patience with all those computer whims which still elude me.

Greetings to our overseas readers! Rob and Dawn Jones, Mike and Colleen and Brandon and Carol HURD (congratulations!) and others...we do not doubt that these stories will make you pine for sunny SA. All those who are drooling at the prospect of reading what your fellow mountaineers have been up to: "patience, my pet" (Homer Simpson). Before you commence, here is an extract from Wordsworth's *The Prelude - Childhood and School-time*. It seems that Wordsworth himself has walked the very same mountains that we at the Mountain and Ski Club are lucky enough to experience. I am certain that most of you will be able to relate to his words:

*"It was a Summer's night, a close warm night,
Wan, dull and glaring, with a dripping mist
Low-hung and thick that cover'd all the sky,
Half threatening storm and rain; but on we went
Uncheck'd, being full of heart and having faith
In our tried Pilot. Little could we see
Hemm'd round on every side with fog and damp,
And, after ordinary travelers' chat
With our Conductor, silently we sank
Each into commerce with his private thoughts:
Thus did we breast the ascent, and by myself
Was nothing either seen or heard the while
Which took me from my musings.
This small adventure, for even such it seemed
In that wild place and at the dead of night,
Being over and forgotten, on we wound
In silence as before. With forehead bent
Earthward, as if in opposition set
Against an enemy, I panted up
With eager pace, and no less eager thoughts."*

TENNY J.
GREENWOOD
--EDITOR--

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

During September 1995 to September 1996, the UCT Mountain & Ski Club has achieved a level of quality and quantity in its activities that has met the high standard of any previous year. The committee has been the major driving force behind the activities and our members have also played very active roles.

THANKS GO TO YOU ALL.

The club's operations can be divided into two realms. Firstly, we facilitate a wide range of activities related to mountaineering in general. Secondly, we are custodians of Zuurberg and as such, we manage the land as best we can.

M **EMBERSHIP:** The club's membership stands at about 535, with 14 special members. The special membership scheme is one of the triumphs of this year, in that special members provide the club with continuity and mountain experience. Orientation week was as much fun as in previous years. Our busy stand manned by the friendly committee was



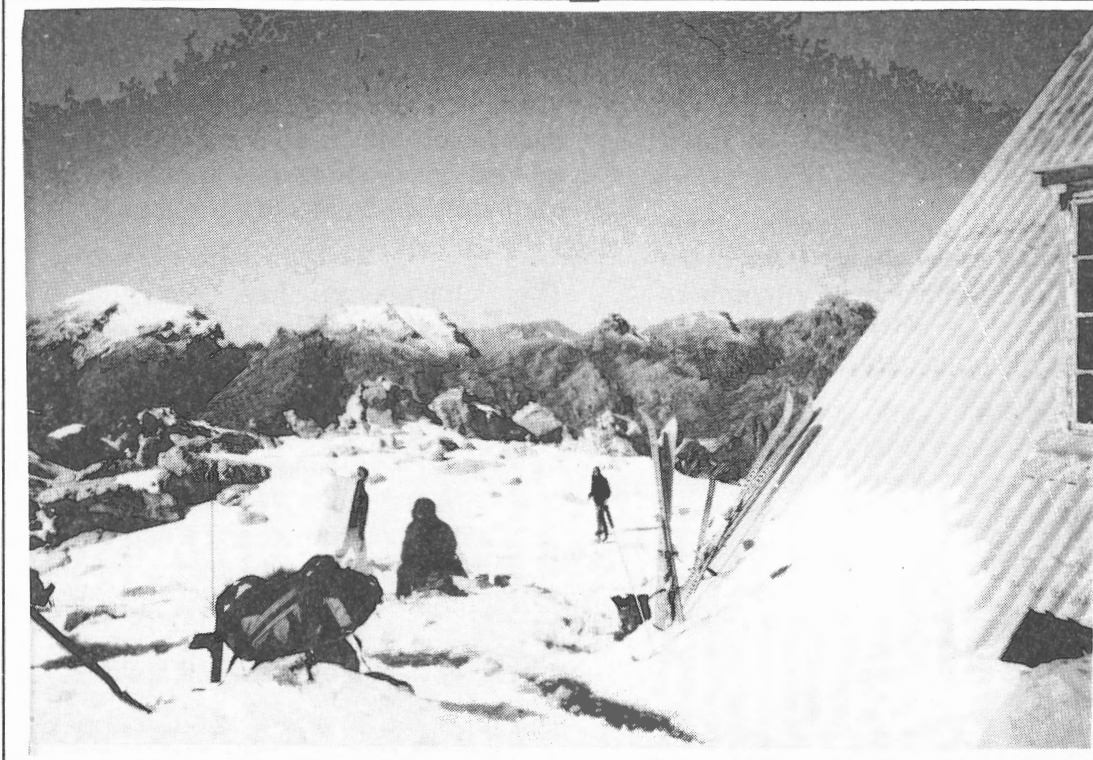
The infamous MSC name is left at the Greek restaurant, along with Roger's broken plate. *Cred: Jenny Greenwood*

a success, judging by the number of members we have. The temporary climbing wall on the plaza was certainly part of this success. We published our usual booklet introducing the club, which also served as the 1st quarter newsletter. Hoare Hut and Alastair Sellick snow-windsurfing featured on the cover of Campus Sport!

A **CTIVITIES:** We have had a wide range of walks, hikes, kloofing trips and climbs over the last year. For the 1st semester of 1996, 625 people have been on club trips! The attendance at these activities attests to the excellent organization, the popularity of what we do and our excellent leaders. Thanks go to Rebecca Gray, our hikes convenor.



The Drakensberg hikers brave the heaviest snowfalls in 70 years in that region during the July vac. *Cred: Pierre Hoffa*



Skiing equipment litters the Waaihoek slopes that attract the daring. Cred: Ernest Fratzak

We had a record attendance of 31 people on the Drakensberg winter meet.

This group split into two parties, both of which descended the escarpment as the heaviest snowfalls in 70 years in that region, began. The one party included a rock climb ascent of the Mitre. Other trips of mountaineering merit were an ascent of Baboon Peak in the Hex and Du Toits Peak via Yellowwood Amphitheatre.

Snow skiing has been happening with much gusto this winter as the snowfalls have been very heavy. Plans are even afoot to get the ski lift working again. An article on skiing in Out There Magazine (June 1996) featured photographs by our chairperson and a story on skiing at Waaihoek. Grass skiing also took place a couple of times during the 1st term.

E NVIRONMENT: Pine hacking continues to be a major thrust in the club, providing students with an opportunity to learn something about conservation as well as lumberjack

skills (using loppers, bow saws and chain saws). December '95 saw the second helicopter pine hack, where the SADF gave us an airlift in and out of the Hex River Mountains, to a place that is inaccessible with a chain saw and fuel in one's pack. More on this in the Zuurberg Report.



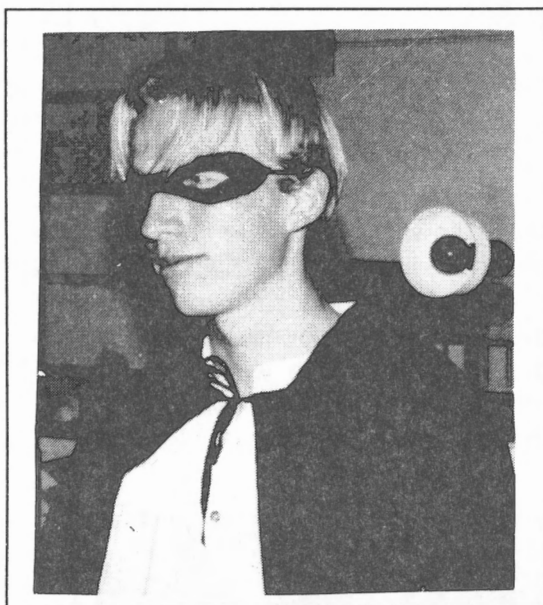
"I'm a lumberjack and I'm OK, I work all night and I sleep all day...I put on womens' clothing and hangs around in bars...I want to be a girlie, just like my dear Mama."

Cred: Pierre Hoffa

Further conservation involvement has included making an input at meetings with MLH, who are responsible for the planning that is going into the Cape Peninsula National Park.

S OCIALS: Our socials have featured slide shows from every continent (bar Antarctica) by members and non-members alike. We have also had a mountaineering quiz.

The quality and attendance at all socials has been really superb this year - special thanks to Ernest Fraczak.



Ernest Zorro knows not of the sorrow on the morrow. Cred: Adrienne

The 1995 Cocktail Party at Llundudno Lifesaving Club was a monster guaranteed to maintain your fitness and mixing ability - about 100 people were present. The Cheese 'n Wine party and the 2nd ever Barn Dance were both huge successes, with 130 people at these. The bar has been afloat on all the appropriate occasions while a new ice climbing route in the North Council Room freezer is waiting to be opened.

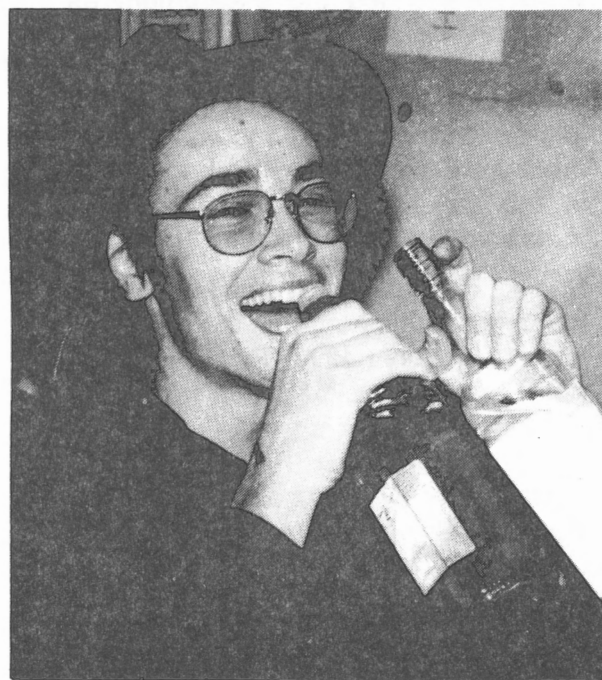
C OMMUNICATION: Newsletters are sent out every quarter to every member as well as other mountaineering clubs in Southern

Africa, equipment shops and other interested parties. Our noticeboard in the Students Union is a whirlwind of information that is constantly changing as trips are organized. We also pin up our meets list on Medical Campus.

The chairperson has set up a distribution list of over 50 members in Pmail, which is used to keep everyone posted of changes in schedule, reminders of the socials, good gear for sale, great snowfalls and more. We have a World Wide Web page on the internet: <http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/src/mountain/index.html>. Queries from overseas do occasionally come to the committee via email, which shows that the site is visited by those interested.

An article on Zuurberg appeared in a Monday Paper of December 1995 under the 'Know Your Campus' column.

Many thanks to Jenny Greenwood and Ryan Hill for their efforts in editing this journal.



Ray Greenwood keeps the bar afloat. Cred: Adrienne

A **SSETS:** The equipment store in the Sports Centre is a treasure trove of gear that is used frequently by members on club trips as well as for their private adventures (if you're getting out, it's our objective to give you as much assistance as possible).

The main climbing wall in Sports Hall 3 has seen improvements in the form of a small diagonal roof between the main overhanging traverse wall and the high section as well as a campus board. The small roof makes the entire wall more aesthetic and allows more climbing variation, while the campus board is an international training tool that provides a standardized test of strength. The wall has also been equipped with lots of new grips. Three serious accidents occurred when people fell off the high wall and only partially landed on the thick mats. They are all expected to recover fully. A scheme has been set up whereby members of the public may use the climbing wall by purchasing a wall card from Sports Administration.

Our library is underused; nonetheless, those who do delve into the old journals for route descriptions and history are well rewarded. The magazines that we subscribe to, especially 'Climbing', are at the other end of the scale - we find it hard to extract the issues back from our members.

D **EVELOPMENT:** Training and development can be viewed in the light of the fact that our involvement with LEAF College was so positive that they now have an active hiking club and have taken charge of their own activities. We will be getting members to take part in some mountain leadership courses in the near future.

Overseas travel subsidies were given to Carel Haumann and Andrew Lewis (R1000 each) to attempt Aconcagua, which at 6960m is the highest mountain in South America and the

highest in the world, outside of the Himalayas. Carel summited!!

A **DMINISTRATION:** Committee meetings run as well as ever and the AGM was attended last year by nearly 50 members. Minutes from committee meetings are distributed to the full committee by the secretary while annual reports by the chairperson, the Zuurberg convenor and the treasurer are made available at the AGM.

S **PORTS AWARDS:** Guy Holwill received full colours (sport and competition climbing); Robyn Freeman (sport and competition climbing) and Carel Haumann (Aconcagua) (see 'Summit of the Americas', p23) received half colours; Roger Diamond received a merit award for club administration.

The running of the student affairs of our club is certainly important. Moreso, the seriousness of being the managers of 8000ha of nearly pristine mountain land provides a challenge at another level.

L **AND:** Zuurberg, in the north-western portion of the Hex River Mountains, has been a mountaineers' paradise for decades. Part of this has been achieved by the continuous efforts of our club in ensuring free access for anyone asking us for a permit. Over the last few years, the situation has been very complicated, with much time and effort going into negotiations with the landowners. Thanks again to Pierre Hoffa for his time with these issues.

On the Waaihoek side, the subdivision of the farm Vredehoek has resulted in many different farmers needing to be consulted before any progress was made. The situation is still not resolved, but the university has constructed a new road and access over the properties of Everson, Nel and Griessel has been secured for all time by means of signed servitudes.

The new road lasted for a few months and was then washed away in some places by a storm over 15-17 June. These portions were not driveable by any sort of vehicle! The efforts of Emma Sealy and other noble road-building volunteers, have led to the repair of one section and the university will be tackling the other parts.



Emma Sealy and other noble road building volunteers repair one of the sections of the new road. Cred: Pierre Hoffa

One of the landowners, Johan Nel, put forward a proposal for rezoning to resort status on his mountainside land. We opposed this on all grounds possible as we value the rural nature of the land below the mountains and are concerned about the impact that a large cluster development would have on the ecosystem and the local community.

On the Ceres side, the one-year leases for encroaching farmers on the NE boundary of Zuurberg have nearly all been signed, however it seems likely that they will all be readjusted to 5-year leases. Further encroachments will now cease, although a request to use some water has been received and is being dealt with by the university's lawyers.

Two large new aluminium signs have been made and positioned at the parking lots for Waaihoek and for Adderley Street.

Of the 5 huts that are used by the Mountain & Ski club, Base Hut and Middle Hut, both in good condition, fall on land owned by the farmer presently giving us access difficulties (Rob Meyer).

In the same storm that destroyed sections of our new road and many other dirt roads around the SW Cape, Pells Hut had its roof ripped off. Thanks must go to Celeste for her work in keeping Pells good looking until its injury. Insurance is being claimed, but this disaster will require a new energy in the club. A rare opportunity now exists for people to get involved in the reconstruction of a hut high in the Cape Mountains. Mamacos

is still awaiting a doting foster parent to work it to a state of beauty. Hoare Hut is in fine condition. We have recently started the Zuurberg Archives, which is a collection of photographic material of the NW Hex River Mountains. It is to be used as a conservation and general management tool, as well as being an historical record of human and natural changes on the property. Thanks to Sandy MacDonald of the MCSA and to Rob Jones for their contributions.

Our permit system works well, but there will always be those who come to the mountains without the correct permission. On a few occasions we have had to tell people politely that they should have a permit as they are in fact on private land.

ROGER DIAMOND

TREASURER'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1996

"NOW YOU SEE IT..."

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING: "I'll just read a little further to see if there's anything vaguely humorous in this article, but there's no point in looking at all those numbers. I mean, what have numbers got to do with hiking and climbing, anyway?"

My response is twofold. Firstly, I make no promises when it comes to wit, although I must point out that I am not a little grey man (read: accountant¹) - or a little grey woman, for that matter. I am an economist, and as such, I strive for efficiency and equity in the allocation of resources. Secondly, numbers have everything to do with the activities we mountaineers engage in. For instance, how can climbers satisfy their egos without reference to such important numbers as 25, 19 or 31? And what's more, climbing is absolutely impossible without digits. Ask any primate! As for those who prefer to imitate tortoises rather than monkeys, how can you possibly decide on which hike to go on if you don't know the number of attractive persons who've signed up? It goes without saying that figures are vital criteria in this regard.

On an equally serious note, if the club did not have any money to spend (or like the Government, if it had funds but did not spend them), there quite simply wouldn't be any activities. So have a look at the figures below to see how your subscription money is spent. I invite any comments or criticisms, which can be directed to my successor.

Just in case you thought you'd escaped with a jargon-free trip through this report, I have one last comment to



"Climbing is absolutely impossible without digits. Ask any primate!" Cred: Dominik

make: ex post and ceteris paribus, supervising the distribution of scarce resources amongst competing economic ends has indeed been a utility-maximising exercise; however, in an attempt to obviate possible welfare-reducing effects of monopolistic control, I have now terminated my 3-year term in office (and accepted a promotion).

JEREMY WAKEFORD
SEPTEMBER 1996



¹Apologies to those members currently studying accounting; please don't take it personally - we love you anyway.

TREASURER'S REPORT:
SEPTEMBER 1996

SPECIAL ACCOUNT	1995 Total	JULY 1996
Income		
Opening balance	2789.18	478.46
Clothing sales	1335.07	675.00
Journal sales & adv.	191.58	285.00
Subscriptions	17650.52	21985.00
Miscellaneous	360.00	15.00
Transfer	6314.24	
TOTAL	28640.59	23438.46
Expenditure		
Admin & Journal	4145.31	2641.71
Climbing wall	7677.78	508.51
Clothing	1375.00	3497.50
Education & development	345.61	112.04
Entertainment	3503.70	1207.00
Equipment	916.53	453.78
Equipment hire	359.00	388.00
Hike losses	652.00	518.00
Insurance premiums (huts)	1270.50	
Library books	72.99	
Petrol	188.56	103.10
Photographs	204.90	
Prizes & Gifts	180.01	
Repair & maintenance	217.37	
Subscriptions	205.22	192.47
Subsidies (July vac)	3850.00	2820.00
Vehicle hire	1833.65	
Miscellaneous	1164.00	97.30
TOTAL	28162.13	12539.41
BALANCE	478.46	10899.05
FORTHCOMING EXPENDITURE (1996)		
Admin		1000.00
Equipment		1000.00
Journal		2000.00
Entertainment (cocktail party etc)		1800.00
Vat deduction from subscriptions		3000.00
TOTAL		8800.00

GRANT ACCOUNT	1995 Total	July 1996
Income	5820.00	3000.00
Expenditure		
Admin	426.74	1550.25
Climbing wall		426.58
Equipment	4487.52	
Repair & Maintenance		118.88
Vehicle hire	90.30	
Transfer	815.44	
TOTAL	5820.00	2095.71
BALANCE	0.00	904.29
WITELS ACCOUNT		
Income		
Opening balance	11926.87	16421.80
Witels revenue	12931.50	1666.60
Hut fees	350.00	300.00
TOTAL	25208.37	18388.40
Expenditure		
Access		570.00
Admin	156.76	59.74
Entertainment		222.07
Equipment	253.48	240.84
Hut maintenance		688.00
Petrol	1022.71	374.12
Photographs	862.33	
Prizes & gifts	1143.69	1000.00
Repair & maintenance	1031.52	136.08
Signboards		4389.86
Sundry (maps etc)	171.65	176.60
Transfer to Special	3998.80	
Vehicle hire	145.63	
TOTAL	8786.57	7855.51
BALANCE	16421.80	10532.89
INVESTMENT ACCOUNT		
TOTAL	23301.97	26669.29

ZUURBERG CONVENOR'S REPORT

This year has seen some drastic changes to Zuurberg. Roads built, washed away, legal battles, a hut destroyed, storms and rain and snow.

A CCESS: The on-going legal soap opera is outlined in Roger's report. Of major importance is the building of a new road by UCT which promptly washed away in 2 main sections. At the moment, no strictly legal route exists to the new parking area on Griessel's land, so climbers are forced to park on the Eversons' land or to use the Eversons' farm roads to get to Griessel's land. We ask people to please act responsibly and considerately during this time.

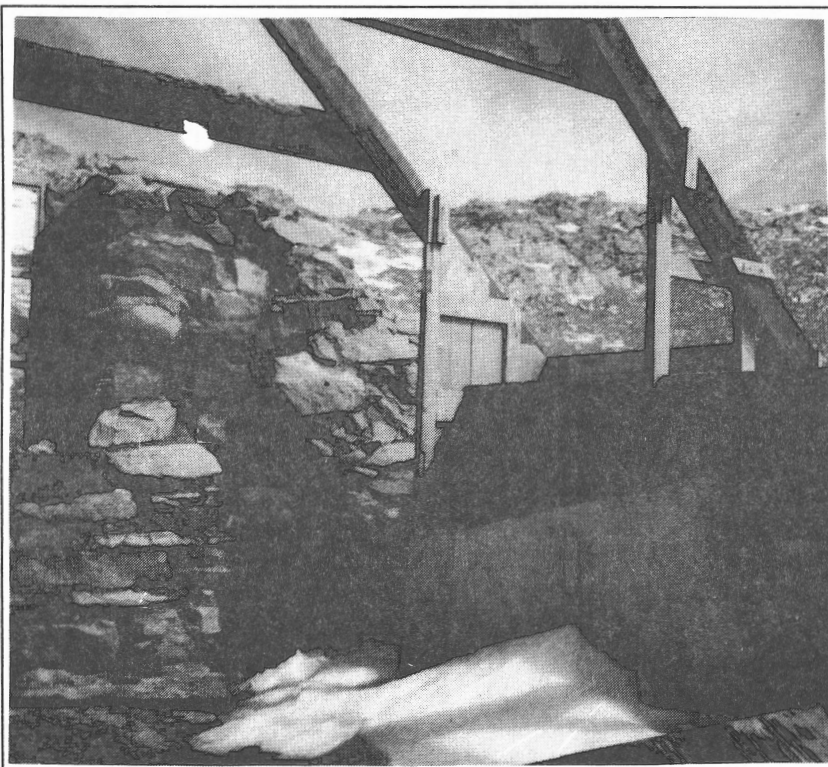
W ITELS: The Witels was descended by 398 people during the 1995/6 summer, an increase of almost 20% since last year. The income from these trips was approximately R13 000. The bookings are handled by Dorothea Augustine of Sports Admin who did a superb job - thanks very much!

The Witels has probably had a fairly thorough scouring out in the storm of 15-17 June. Certain campsites may have altered slightly. We urge summer users not to take too much for granted map-wise.

No serious accidents took place on Zuurberg this year. There were 8 policing parties in the Witels over the last season. Some trespassers were caught and told to leave the land - thanks to Axel Holscher and Roger. Trespassing has become more frequent in the last couple of years. One of the most annoying aspects of this is that these particular people also seem determined to light fires and discard rubbish on the mountain. Firm action will be taken by UCT should this behaviour continue.

Z UURBERG: There were 13 general permits issued this year for Zuurberg. The Fresher's Country Meet was held at Adderley Street again and saw 90 people attend.

The Zuurberg Archives is a collection of photographs of the property, which show momentous occasions, dramatic events, fires, hacks, rescues, etc. Contributors this year have been Pierre Hoffa, Rob Jones, Sandy MacDonald and Brian de Villiers. If you have any photographs you think are interesting in this regard, please give us a copy.



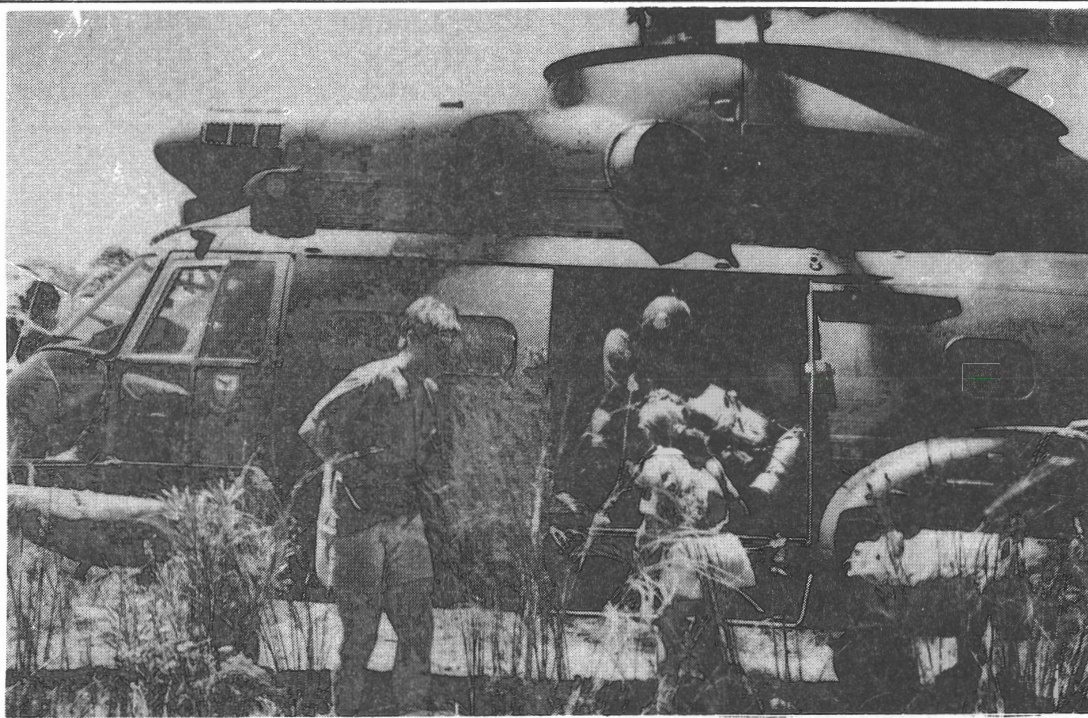
"The most dramatic event in 1996 was the damaging of Pells Hut..."
Cred: Pierre Hoffa

H **UTS:** The most dramatic event in 1996 was the damaging of Pells Hut during the long weekend of 15-17 June. The hut convenor, Celeste Cullen, had recently devoted much of her time getting the roof repainted and the inside cleaned up. What appears to have happened is that the wind lifted the roof up at the back and tore it and some roof timbers right off the hut, scattering it over the mountainside. Fortunately the hut was unoccupied at the time. Many people have expressed an interest in helping to rebuild the hut and we look forward to their and your help and support during the summer season. Base Hut and Middle Hut, both on Rob Meyer's land, are in good condition. Hoare Hut is in good condition except for a few leaks.

Conrad, the man behind it all, has done a sterling job in all these activities. In liaison with Kirstenbosch, he organized chain saws and fuel and a training session with Philip le Roux. Thanks to Philip for his time again.

Ivan Boyd, an ex-MSA member, has been exploring some remote areas of the upper Witels Basin for the last decade, on and off, in order to cut down remote and very inaccessible pine trees. Thanks go to him for his useful reports and astounding work.

The ascent to the huts has recovered nicely after the fire in March 1995. Certain areas of the path are suffering from erosion and the path may need to be rerouted in several sections. The Adderley Street path is still badly eroded where it descends to the Witels.



A mini-skirt clad Conrad, the man behind it all, helps to load the Oryx. "I like wearing it; It's free and airy." *Cred: James Cullis*

Thanks to Celeste for doing an excellent job this season.

Mamacos Hut is still awaiting a doting foster parent to work it to a state of beauty.

C **ONSERVATION:** Four pine hacks took place over the last year, one being a helicopter hack which once again assaulted the slopes of Michell's Peak. Thanks to the SAAF for 'loaning' us one of their Oryxes.

This coming year the Zuurberg portfolio should concentrate on the rebuilding of paths. There is a burnt hackea bush above the path on the stretch above Agony Rock. The few seedlings can easily be eradicated in the next few years.

That's all for this year; may next year be just as exciting (just a little less dramatic!).

ANDREW LEWIS

B AILEY'S PEAK 1995

Date: 12 August 1995

Leader: Graeme Greenwood

Group: Graeme Greenwood, Greg Hill, Nina Veenstra, Andrew Ross-Innes and Nienke van Schaik

Written By: Nienke van Schaik

The Bailey's Peak ad on the noticeboard this year said "see if you can find the path". Rumour has it that they didn't but last year we did and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to let everyone know that it can be done. On the 12th August 1995 Graeme Greenwood took his four loyal subjects off to tackle this infamous peak. On the notice board Graeme had written "This is one day walk where you'll be able to get away from it all. Bailey's Peak towers majestically in the Bain's Kloof area, ruling over any counter part on the map. It offers spectacular 360° views, breathtaking in fact".

With our experienced leader and his abilities to find paths where none exist it took us only 3 hours to get to the top (record breaking time, I do believe). The view was everything we'd imagined it to be...it was absolutely magnificent.

The most memorable part of about the lunch break up there was the popcorn that Graeme made. Having forgotten his oil he was desperately pleading for margarine, tuna oil, in fact anything to make his popcorn pop. When we couldn't help he resorted to the next best thing...lemon juice. It was, I must admit, the most interesting tasting popcorn I've ever had. Unfortunately I can't recommend this method - it leaves your pots totally black!

Next door to Bailey's Peak is another peak and since we were in an

adventurous mood we conquered it too. From there we started our descent which lasted a mammoth four hours. This was due to the fact that the mountain was a mass of loose stones, (definitely not my favourite) which made the task very difficult.

Eight hours after setting off, we returned to our vehicle exhausted but satisfied and proud of the fact that we had successfully completed our mission.

The question now remains...will next year's group succeed? I'll definitely do my best to be there. A closing quote of encouragement in Graeme's words, "Come on, it's a goodie".

B AILEY'S PEAK 1996

Date: 30 March 1996

Leader: Nina Veenstra

Group: 6 (minus three = three)

Written By: Francois de Roubaix and Andrew Swanepoel

At 7 a.m. Saturday, a few keen hikers met at UCT to tackle Bailey's Peak, despite the overcast weather. The prospect of rain failed to dampen the spirits of the hikers as we departed from UCT in 2 cars shortly after seven.

At 9 a.m., half the party arrived at the hike starting point which was situated just past Tweede Toll near Bain's Kloof. The original party of six was reduced to three when the second car failed to arrive. After waiting and searching one and half hours, we decided to begin the hike at 11 a.m. without our lost colleagues.

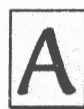
The hike consisted of a stiff climb up a river gorge leading up to Bailey's Peak.

There was no defined route and navigation was left to the hike leader's discretion. The terrain was mostly steep slopes and loose rocks, making climbing uneven and difficult. The burnt fynbos stumps inflicted grazes to the shins, frustrating hikers to the point of cursing every piece of fynbos on the mountain. We soon discovered that our hike leader, Nina possessed superhuman qualities, not requiring water stops or breaks. She refused to give us breaks longer than three minutes, since she was convinced that if we sat down for any longer we would never be able to get going again, (which most probably was the case).

As a form of encouragement, we were promised a most spectacular 360 degree view from the mountain top. After much exertion the summit was reached at 2 p.m., and comment was made: quote: "So much for the magnificent view!", since clouds had obscured the promised vista. After a short half hour lunch break we commenced the descent, following what we thought to be the best route. The first half of the route down was flat and easy, but this was short lived as we had to negotiate a steep slope, consisting of loose rocks; for the last kilometre and a half. We were relieved to reach level ground after climbing and stumbling for five and a half hours in total. Our tired and battered bodies were rejuvenated by a refreshing swim in the mountain river.

In the final analysis, more time was spent physically and mentally exerting ourselves than enjoying the beautiful surroundings. Therefore for those who enjoy a 'relaxed hike' stay away. This hike can only be recommended for those hikers who enjoy strenuous 'boondooo bashing'.

Thanks must go to those who drove us to our destinations and to our hike leader, Nina for leading a hike of such grueling stature and for tolerating the moans and groans along the way. Who would believe that in fact a good time was had by all.



LASDAIR'S DECADENT DOUBLE CHOCOLATE BROWNIES



275gr dark chocolate
50gr unsalted butter
75gr brown sugar
50gr white sugar
2 eggs
1 Tbsp vanilla essence
50gr cake flour
90gr chopped nuts
150gr white chocolate cut in chunks
(pecans & walnuts)

Preheat oven to 180°C

Melt dark chocolate over double boiler with butter. Take off heat, add brown and white sugars. Stir for 2 minutes. Beat in the eggs and vanilla essence. Stir in flour until blended. Add nuts and white chocolate chunks and mix well. Pour into a 20cm x 20cm baking pan lined with tin foil. Bake at 180°C for 20-25 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Do not overbake.

Cut into small chunks and use to get your friends to do neat tricks and to bribe them. These brownies will be triply decadent if glazed with chocolate fudge icing. ENJOY.



ELEPHANT'S EYE CAVE FRESHER'S WALK

Date: 24 February 1996

Leader: Jenny Greenwood

Group: Thirty+ experimenting
Freshers

Written By: Caroline Colman

On Saturday morning at 10:00 we arrived for what was to be a three and a half hour hike up to Elephant's Eye cave and back.

Upon starting off, the over enthusiastic ones streaked ahead, only later to discover that they had no idea which way they were heading, causing much consternation for the leader who was finding it a demanding task to keep all her subjects in view.

After enjoying the cool breeze through the trees, we emerged from the steepest part of our hike where we continued in the open, admiring the proteas along the way. Just before reaching Elephant's Eye we attempted our own version of the "Uno jam" on the top of a rock. This was, however, rather unsuccessful as everyone kept falling off.

From this point we could see a different perspective of Table Mountain. Surprisingly, it was also flat from behind! We then continued on a short walk to the cave where we had a well deserved snack and an equally splendid view.

On our way back we took a detour past the waterfall. Most of our group missed this exciting phenomenon, which consisted only of a trickle of water over a pile of rocks!

With tired limbs, but having thoroughly enjoyed our day, we piled into the cars and returned home.

T RANQUILITY CRACKS HIKE

Date: 5 MAY 1996

Leader: Jeremy Wakeford

Group: Jeremy, Sandy, Rinky,
Caryn, Cameron and Rebecca

Written By: Rebecca Gray

It dawned a chilly morn with an ominous table cloth spilling over the mountain. Conditions like this, it seems, separate the hard core mountaineers from those who find a warm and comfortable Sunday morning bed more alluring than the crunch of sand and stone underfoot, the refreshing blast of crisp autumn wind. Despite the dismal conditions, the six coolest and most hard core of the club, decided to brave the elements and see how far we could get along the planned route.....

A pleasant walk along the pipe track finally brought us to Corridor Ravine and soon we were sheltered from a rather chilly wind under a rock at the top enjoying Sandy's biscuits and showing off the latest Mike Lundy hiking accessories. Walking toward the cable station, Jeremy steered us along an obscured path to the cracks. This hidden wonder of Table Mountain is a maze of narrow cracks filled with Yellowwood trees winding their way skywards.

A long and leisurely sunny lunch with copious quantities of biscuits and dirty jokes was followed by an exploration of our most awesome surroundings. Then an amble down Kasteelspoort and back to the cars.

To all who didn't come and those weenies who stayed tucked in bed: don't miss out next time - this is one hike you'll do again and again and again.

FRESH HIKE



Date: Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd
March 1996

Leader: Andrew Lewis

Group: 90 intrepid souls

Written By: Roger Diamond

Many times we have all described a pleasant weekend hike with a few friends in the mountains. However, you have never described an event, using only publishable words, in which 90 students, yes 90, have attempted to survive a climatological phenomenon in the Hex River Mountains. This tale of survival is a gross understatement of the facts.

We left Cape Town - this went rather smoothly - well done Andrew Lewis. We arrived at Kweperfontein - eventually!. Some of us could read a map - others couldn't. Some of us could drive - others were in a red BMW, which, contrary to popular belief, is not the fastest machine on the road. Great complications aside, everyone who wanted to be there, got there.

With over 20 vehicles scattered on the farm Kweperfontein and the state mountain land, the procession, not be confused with any sort of progression, began. In the midday of late summer on a North-facing slope, the heat was hot, our patience was shot and pools there were not. In the end, however, our destination was got.

Ever been to a busy airport? Compare this with the Adderley Street international landing strip - flat and grassy and scattered with rocks, but we don't close - people continue arriving well into the night.

Swims were swum, jumps were done, all in the sun, an afternoon of fun.

Trying to keep 5% beverages cool earlier, we quickly shifted to passing the 18 and higher percentage liquids around. Cuisine is rad, and food is had, singing begins, we must be mad. Right, Summernight City in the mountains! Wrong, winter's wicked wrath, wind and wain, cold and pain, the blizzard came. The night dragged on, song after song, our voices grew weak, the wind grew strong. Oh no, we cried, a full moon will keep us awake, but the bright side was obscured by clouds and the dark side, well, we'll see you there.

People are funny, you know. They want cold refreshing water in the afternoon and when they get it a few hours later from the sky, like a wish granted from heaven, they don't want it. In fact, they hate it. I'm definitely one of those people.

Now it's dark; and it's cold, because it's windy; but it's dry, yet it's cloudy. What is it? Panic breaks out, the troops want to surrender. No, no fair friends, do not go, for the clouds scudding in on the north-west cannot harm while the wind down here is south-east. The scent of rain brought by the messenger wind is whisked away just as fast. So the worms wriggle into their thin tubes and the screeching silence of the howling breeze sets us to sleep. Hold on tight, it's going to be one hell of a night.

Quiet murmurings all night through; spit spat came the supersonic dew. 4 a.m. and I'm nightmaring that it's raining. No problem - I'll get up to reality. It is raining. Problem! "Andrew, it's raining". "You noticed".

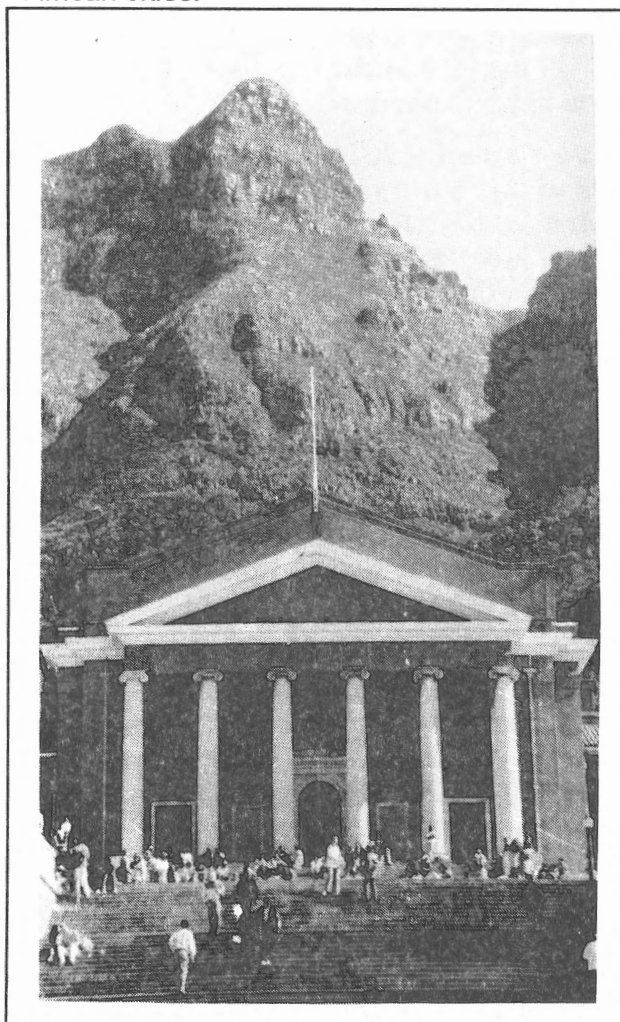
AND SO.

The blackest of South-Easters has trumped us; with no heart for a Diamond, Queen Hex jacked up her tricks, clubbed us with cloud and broke our contract into tiny sticks and stones may break our bones, but the weather will just wet us. And so it did. Macho braves and dainty damsels of night

before, having shivered the morning hours through, realised the unrelenting spirit of the Hex. No need to wake - we never slept. No need to pack - it's all been drunk. Get up, get down, get off this mountain.

It was a cold day, yet the sun was beating down on the hikers at the side of the mountain; there was a strong wind, a rainbow in the blue sky. The wind on the mountainside had us wired to the ground. I believe this was a day of miraculous weather, this is an article for you all; the way good fortune follows us over mountains, the way we climb them, low and tall; the way we look to a distant constellation disappearing in the cloudy sky; I believe we were washed out, but don't cry baby, don't cry, don't cry.

And so we spent just one night under African skies.



The Freshers try to escape it...but when they return, it's there, looming in the background.

Cred: Dominik Rudmann

FRESHER'S HIKE: COLD NIGHT, WARM SPIRIT IN THE WIT-ELS

Written By: Joshua

The air was pleasantly warm as the convoy of cars pulled slowly to a halt on the gravel road. Soon the sound of a hundred backpacks, being loaded onto a hundred backs. Rasping of boots on gravel, bulging leg muscles, and the Mountain and Ski Club was off.

First stop was a coffee-coloured farm dam, where impromptu kloofing took place. Fearless hikers plunged 10m from the dam wall, striking the water with a loud thump.

Camp was forged on a stony mountain slope, overlooking a deep gorge. As dusk approached, the hissing sound of cooking suppers (such as instant noodles) was just audible above the rustle of the wind. Nightfall was greeted with the sound of popping corks, as the party made merry. Lively conversation and enthusiastic singing bisected the chill mountain air until late...when the last hardy hikers crept into the warmth of their hollowfibre sleeping bags.

A steady, soaking rain awakened the party at 4am on Sunday morning. With tremendous speed, belongings were stowed in backpacks and the group straggled off into the grey mist. By 11:30am most hikers were in the warmth of their cars dreaming of sleep and the bath ahead.

200 boots nestle in 100 cupboards, waiting to be called to service, the next time a mountain challenge beckons.

Get into first Gear, for your next Adventure.



GENERAL HIKING & OUTDOOR JACKETS



We designed our specialised jackets like the lightweight Lundy jacket and the more heavy-duty Tafelberg jacket for hiking and other general outdoor activities. Both of the ranges are made from K-Tech waterproof, breathable fabric.

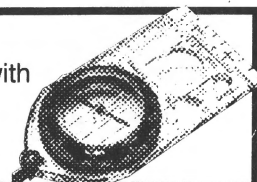


KNIVES AND MULTI-TOOLS

Our range of Swiss Army Knives and multi-tools, like the Leatherman, make the best companions for any adventure.

COMPASSES

You won't lose your way with one of our top quality compasses to guide you through the walks of life.



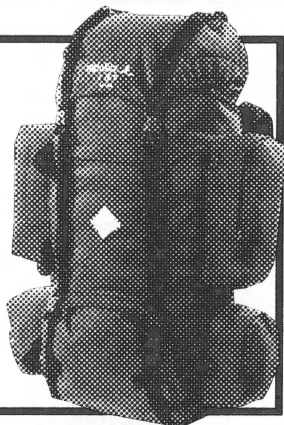
HIKING & CAMPING MATTRESSES

For your next trip be sure to take one of our closed cell or self inflatable Aero-rests with, it will provide you with comfort when you need it most.



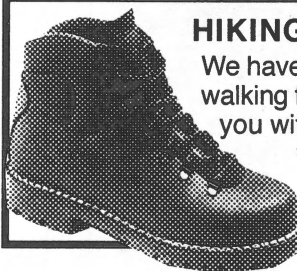
RUCKSACKS

If you are planning a European tour or to climb the Cederberg we will have a rucksack for you. We stock the leading brand names in rucksacks, day packs and hip packs.



HIKING BOOTS

We have specialised and general walking footwear that will provide you with comfort and durability when you are on a hike, expedition or just a stroll up Tafelberg.



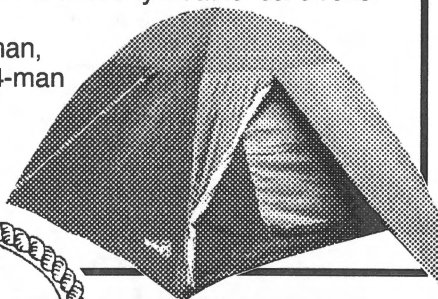
SLEEPING BAGS

Our wide selection of sleeping bags range from summer camping bags to pure down expedition bags. So no matter where you are going or what you are doing, it will provide you with a good nights rest.



TENTS

Our selection of tents will provide you with shelter against almost any weather conditions. Our range includes 2-man, 3-man and 4-man dome tents.



TYGER VALLEY
946-2290

CAPE TOWN
45-7611

WATERFRONT
419-0019

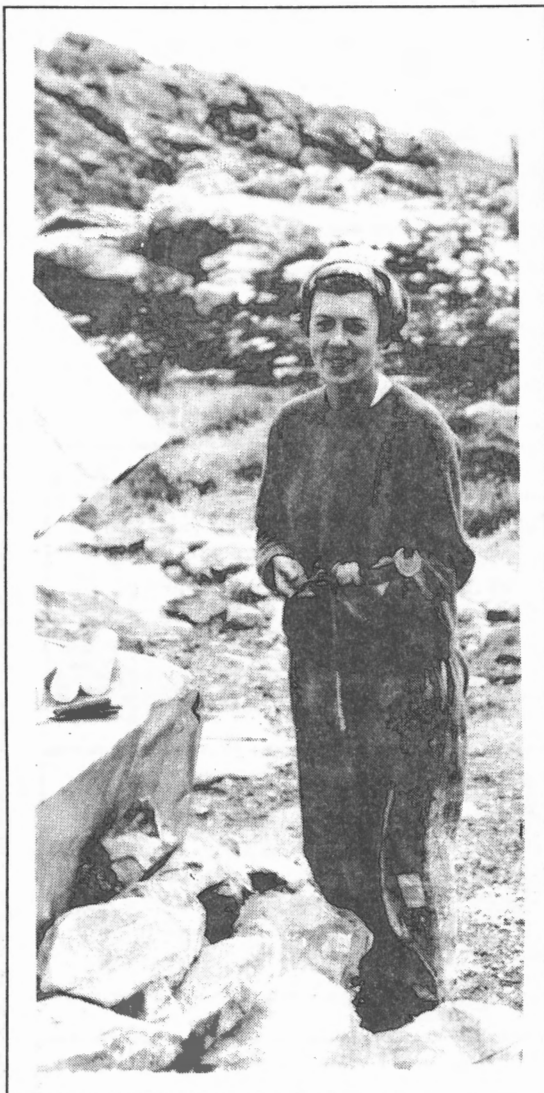
BLUE ROUTE
75-8470

CLAREMONT
64-2148

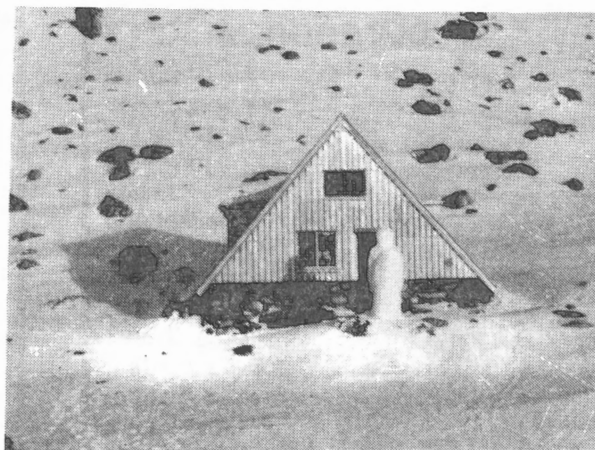
N1 CITY
595-1220

SOMERSET WEST
885-27121
SUN GALLERY
23-2095

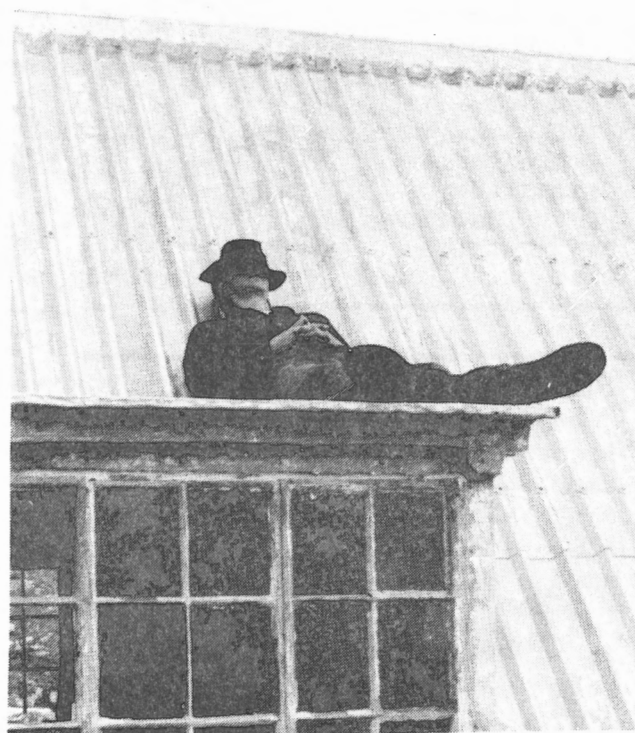
Happy 25th Birthday Hoare Hut !



Celeste doing a hard day's work
Cred: Alasdair Keen



Hoare Hut...What else?
Cred: Jeremy Wakeford



Alasdair doing a hard day's rest
Cred: Celeste Cullen

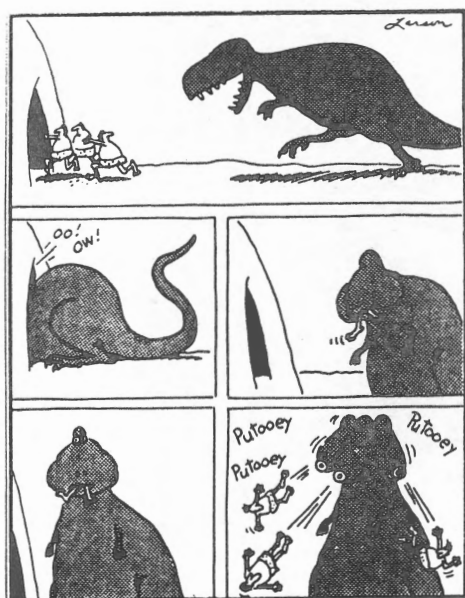




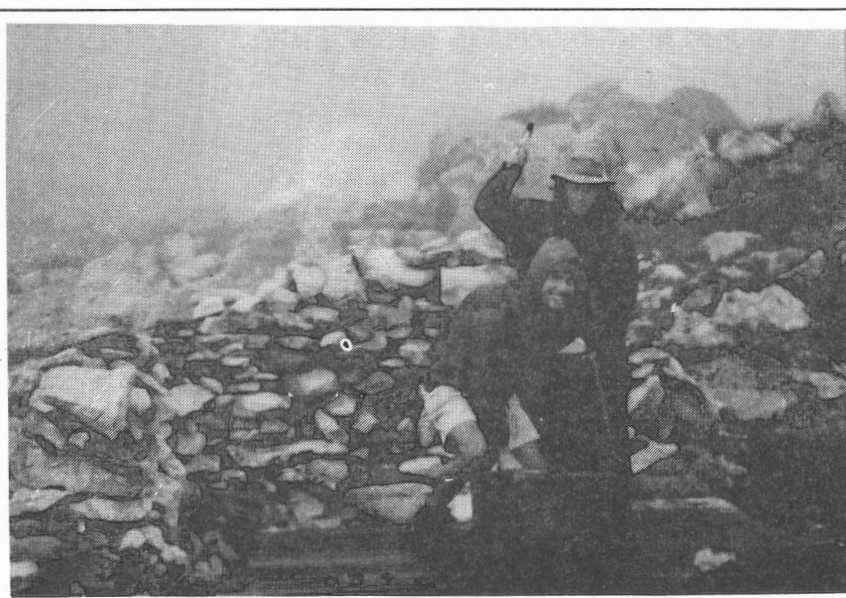
Pierre scrambles breakfast
Cred: Jenny Greenwood



Contemplation at the hut
Cred: Ray Greenwood



In the days before soap



Daemons from the bog - Trainspotting.
James and Marc revamp the loo-with -the- view.Cred: James Cullis

UNDERGROUND, OVERGROUND WOMBELING FREE.....



Date: 24 March 1996

Leader: Uncle Bulgaria?

Group: 16 Enthusiastic Womblers

Written By: Graham Shillington

A group of 16 enthusiastic womblers headed off to the Kalk Bay Caves on Sunday the 24th of March to go exploring. After a leisurely trudge, they came across a dark hole in the mountain side. Some of the wombles had come well prepared for crawling through dark, narrow passages in the mountain side, bringing torches to shine the way, and some had even remembered to bring long pants to protect their knees. They entered the cave one by one, helping each other to see by shining their torches and warning each other of tricky terrain. Bats inhabiting the cave were most upset when the wombles refused to offer them tea, but as Uncle Bulgaria pointed out, there was still more exploring to be done. The cave eventually opened on the other side of the mountain, much to the delight of the group.

More walking brought the wombles to another hole, more cleverly concealed than the first. After an initial squeeze, the cave opened out. They all sat inside the cavern and talked about what they would have for lunch, while Uncle Bulgaria had forty winks. After exploring further, they found that the cave was in fact larger than they had first thought. Another tight passage led to another large cavern. While crawling through this passage, one of the wombles nearly had a heart attack

after seeing a very large spider, which turned out to be completely harmless as it was made entirely of rubber. When the group decided to turn back, the womble in front came to a dead end. "We're lost!" exclaimed Uncle Bulgaria, but things were not as they seemed.

It turned out that the entrance to the tight passage had been blocked by some mischievous womble. A well deserved lunch was enjoyed outside, by all, especially Uncle Bulgaria who was pleased to see daylight again. Some of the wombles decided to head off home, while the others continued exploring, but by later that afternoon all the wombles were back at their respective homes in Wimbledon enjoying nice cups of hot tea.



Cred: Adrienne

SUMMIT OF THE AMERICA'S: ACONCAGUA (ARGENTINA)



Date: 28 November -
16 December 1995

Group: Nico van Gijzen (MCSA),
Hugo Vaughan (past UCT MSC,
MCSA), Carel Haumann (UCT MSC
and MCSA)

Written By: Carel Haumann

I had always thought that one goes to climb big mountains to get away from humans and to suffer silently in Reinhold Messner's 'white loneliness'. This hypothesis was not to hold true...

Having arrived in Buenos Aires on 26 November, we made rapid progress across the Pampas and into the Andes. On the 29th we began our 3 day walk-in to the base camp of Aconcagua. At 6965m, Aconcagua is the highest point on earth, outside the Himalayas. After a very strenuous day's walking in a blizzard we reached base camp (*Plaza de Mulass*, 4239m). I spent the rest of the day suffering from altitude sickness: nausea, retching headaches and a general feeling of self-pity. If a helicopter had arrived at that stage and offered me a lift down, I would have accepted it with open arms. By the next morning I was feeling much better but Nico had become very ill overnight. After consulting a doctor, who thought he had pneumonia, Nico decided to go down on a mule.

Hugo and I rested one more day, and then decided to attempt *Cuerno* (5500m; situated adjacent to Aconcagua) as an acclimatization exercise. At about 4800m, grunting, swearing and up to our chins in very loose snow on a 45 - degree slope, we

gave up. We simply lacked sufficient Alpine experience to push the route any further in these dubious conditions.. On the way down Hugo fell into a small crevasse. He injured his knee and we had to wait a further three days for him to recover before we were ready to tackle Aconcagua proper.

On 7 December, each laden with about 25kg, we finally moved up to the first major camp - *Nido de Condors* (5400m). We were going to attempt the *Ruta Normal*, and not the Polish Glacier as planned earlier: we realised the Polish Glacier would probably be too difficult; the *Ruta Normal* offers relatively straightforward walking to the summit with the main difficulties being restricted to the immense cold and lack of oxygen (high altitude). Up to that stage we had had some tough days, but now we were inside the very hardest of Dante's inferno: the weather worsened, for obvious reasons the air was thinner, we had to melt snow to get water, temperatures were down to -10 °. We had to cram into Hugo's 1-man bivvy bag-style tent which we had opted to take instead of my bigger one in order to save weight - our party size being reduced from 3 to 2. After 2 terrible nights in the snowed-up tent we moved to the final high camp-Berlin at 6000m. Here we were lucky enough to have a small 3-man hut to sleep in. After only one night, we launched our first summit attempt on 10 December.

The cold was incredibly painful. A few days earlier some Norwegians recorded temperatures of -25°Celsius on their summit bid. An icy wind pelted us with spindrift, my hands went dead, my toes ached, walking speed was reduced to 3 breaths per step, breathing was so hard that diaphragm and intercostal muscles screamed. I had serious (but unfounded) fears that I was going to lose some fingers due to frostbite. As we got higher it became apparent that we were not going to make the summit that day: we were going too slowly and a storm was coming in. At 6600m we turned back.

After yet another rest day, we made our second summit bid. The day dawned slightly warmer than previous days and wind-speed was down to bearable levels. I had an immense desire to get to the top - summit fever. Unfortunately, despite the good weather and my determination, I felt terrible. I was more nauseous than before, had vision problems, felt disorientated. The three nights at 6000m had obviously taken their toll. However, I stumbled on, repeatedly telling myself "just a 100m more; can't turn back in weather like this; won't get another chance". Eventually, at 6650m, we reached a horror-scare slope called the *Calanetta*. On the *Calanetta* I was down to 6 breaths per step. One step up, slide half a step down. So many times I would collapse onto the scree slope, and fade into a state of non-existence. It took me 3 hours to get from 6650m to 6850m.

At 5:00 pm on 12 December 1995 (incidentally also my birthday) we gained the summit of the America's - 6965 metres above sea level. I cannot remember much of the summit or the descent which followed - only that it was atrocious and that I fell at least 50 times on the *Calanetta*.

Aconcagua was much more than a mountain simply to be climbed, conquered and dismissed. It was a journey into the very essence of the human experience. In outrageous conditions imposed by nature, people were forced to shed all their masks, prejudices, and personal spaces. I returned to Cape Town with memories of a frozen blue sky and a vision of a human race which is more than the anonymous, masked faces of everyday life.

I would like to thank the UCT MSC for generous financial support; also Him who guided me to the top.

MOUNTAIN AND SKI OUTS AND INS



(To be taken with a pinch of salt... and a lot of tequila)

OUT 	IN 
Heli-snow-boarding	Slogging up Waaihoek and skiing
Salad-dressing	Cross-Dressing
Setting Traps for Rastas	Letting the bastard drown
PMT (Penne, Moricelle & Tagliatelle)	S&M (Spaghetti & Macaroni)
Acrophobia	Xenophobia
Colin Davidson	Elijane de Vries
Work Parties	Parties
Idiocy	Idiosyncrasy
Designer Swimwear	Skinny-Dipping
Doing the Witels in a Day	Doing it in five
Abstinence	Decadence
Using the New road	Using the old road
Yuppie shades	Cheap sunglasses <i>or</i>

MOUNTAIN CLUB WALK IN THE HELDERBERG



Date: 19 May 1996

Leader: Rinky Vamvadelis

Group: Erna van Schalkwyk, Janet Allsopp, Rinky Vamvadelis, Daniel Maksa, Greshna Le Hane, Lynn Bates, Ingrid Vriend, Colin Bates, Cath Moffat, Cathy Glover, Amy Cantlay, Margit Wilhelm, Caryn Maxwell, Jeremy Wakeford, Nicky Bax, Joey Prevost

Written By: Janet Allsopp

A ccording to the notice board 4 people were meant to be going on this hike, but 4 x 4 arrived (yes 16?). [Good Show !!(ed.)]



The Helderberg hikers on top. Cred: Jeremy Wakeford

From the Helderberg Nature Reserve, we planned to walk up to 'the saddle' and onto West Peak, where we expected to find spectacular views of the mountains surrounding Somerset West, the Hottentot's Holland basin below and the entire False Bay area.

Looking up from the starting point, Disa Gorge looked so far away and everyone (O.K. - some of us !) were a bit sceptical about the ascent. The distance was made less ominous by the fact that the walk follows a marked pathway, so there was no way we could get lost. The weather was also good and remained that way the whole day. Rinky gave us moral support, ensuring that none of us lagged behind. The hiking became easier as the day progressed - and worthwhile, when reaching the top, we could look over the mountain and False Bay coastline. Some of the more energetic of us (notably Joey and Jeremy) decided to climb a nearby "rocky finger", whilst the rest of us had a break.

After the much deserved rest, we took a two-hour walk to the saddle, where

we sat back and admired the beautiful views, one over False Bay and the other of the mountains surrounding Somerset West. Meanwhile, we contemplated climbing West Peak or the Dome. West Peak (the easier of the two) was chosen. On arrival at the lunch spot at West Peak, numerous photos were taken by Mr. Candid Camera himself, Jeremy (using at least 10 cameras!).

Hiking down, we had time to admire the proteas, ericas, sunbirds and Fiscal Shrikes. We also found a whole new undiscovered path! Helderberg Nature Reserve offers many more day hikes and has an herbarium with enlightening displays. Thanks Rinky for organizing the hike and making sure we all reached the top.

D U TOITS PEAK VIA YELLOWWOOD AMPHITHEATRE

Date: Saturday and Sunday 4th, 5th
May 1996

Leader: Roger Diamond.

Group: Peter Hartley, David Acott,
Paul Leroy, Jeff McQuaid, Warwick
Board.

Written By: Peter Hartley

The notice board message read "Do Toys Peek???" with Roger - our intrepid leader - promising a trip, via the scenic route, up 2000m for some stunning views of just about the whole world. (Did anybody read the small print at the bottom - 'rating=extreme'?).

Saturday afternoon saw the seven of us heading off in the rain and mist for an exciting (life is cheap) drive over the Du Toits Pass - a certain Russian\ American member of the party was a bit horrified that this was the old N1 "jeez man, where are the guardrails???" The stove pyrotechnics at the mountain club hut that night provided some good lessons on why there should never be an Olympic climbing event - one of them might get asked to light the flame (bye, bye Atlanta).

Sunday morning made a brave attempt to dawn, but the mist lying three quarters down the mountain made it a slow process. Full of optimism that the mist would lift, we set off at 8 a.m. from a spot somewhere along the new N1, about 6 km from the tunnel. We headed up the wet and slippery scree slope and forests. Roger kept telling us that he thought we were heading up Yellowwood Amphitheatre and that when the sun shone, the face at the end of the gorge was definitely also

yellow. We couldn't even see the gorge. Eventually Roger recognized the only route out of the gorge, which doesn't require a spiderman outfit, and we headed up. Then it was onto a long traverse across the front face of the range, which is necessary before you can climb up onto the ridge. Roger kept telling us that there were some "absolutely awesome" drop-offs just to our right - "which way is right Rog?" And then, momentarily, we had a window open in the mist (gulp) - Roger wasn't making this all up.

We had to stop and eat to recover from the shock; meanwhile Roger went ahead to make sure that we were on the right path. An hour later, after a soul searching walkabout in the mist, Rog was back and we were pushing on. The mist was starting to lift and soon we were at the top of the ridge with stunning views of both the Molenaars Valley and the back of the mountain range towards the Breede River. The walk along the back of the range towards Du Toits Peak itself, and then the final 300m climb to the summit required no tricky moves, just a bit of stamina. At 1995m, the peak has an absolutely staggering view from the Atlantic in the West to the Hex in the East, and everything in between. Unfortunately the time was now 4.30 p.m., and we had 2 hours before dark.

The trip down took a much shorter, direct route back towards the mountain club hut. Just as it was getting dark we were down to the 'Gendarme', a free standing sentinel guarding the mountain at 1266m. It had been mistaken the previous evening for the Peak itself. A short cut had us down onto a dirt road by dark, and then it was an easy walk by torchlight back to the hut, and on to Cape Town.

Altogether a most staggeringly memorable trip. Recommended in later summer or spring when the days are longer and there is no mist. Epic, but worth it.



THE MAGICAL MOUNTAIN GOAT TOUR

Date: 11 August

Leader: Warwick

Group: Pete, Nick, Phil, Dion, Bruno, Jeremy, Caroline and Richard, David Acott, Warwick

Written By: David Acott

Seldom, if ever in my hiking career have I ever seen a leader as enthusiastic about a route as Uncle Warwick was for the Magical Mountain Goat Tour (he was like a child before Christmas), and with justified reason too! On one of those magical, sunny winter days that seem to hide in between the cold fronts, we proceeded to the lower cable station, from where the ten of us, now caught up in Warwick's excitement, proceeded swiftly to the contour path, along it, and up to the Saddle between Devil's Peak and TM.

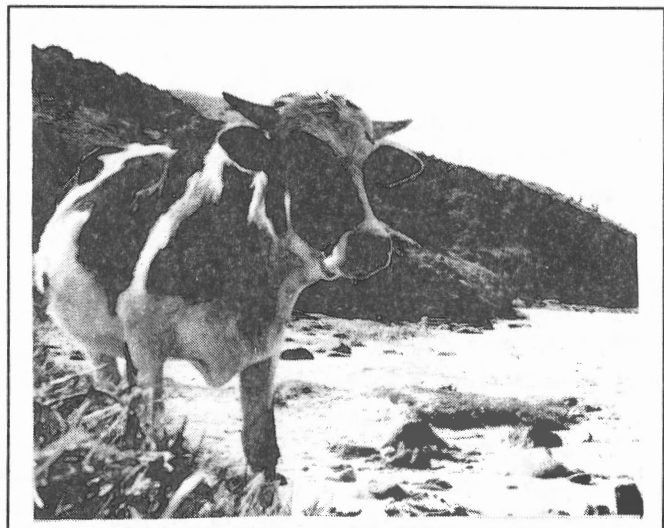
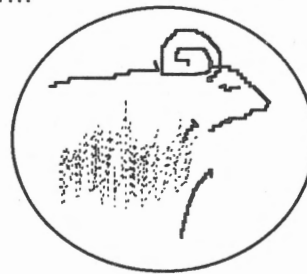
From there, the mountain goat part of the tour begins, with an ascent of Ledges, which was superb and gave those with a fear of heights more than a bit of an adrenaline rush. A short walk across the Table took us to Carrell's Ledge, providing exposure which gave even the most experienced mountaineers butterflies in their stomachs. Who should we meet there but Axel Holscher - not often you get a traffic jam on Carrell's Ledge. We stopped for lunch just on the other side of Carrell's Ledge, and looking back from there, it was hard to believe that there was a path where we had been.

After lunch, we walked via Maclear's Beacon onto the 'B' route on left face to Central Table, giving us an interesting walk on tufts of grass, and through lots and lots of 'climber's friend'.

Then down a very steep subsidiary gulley into Platteklip. Warwick then took us out of Platteklip on the 770m traverse - he still claims that there was a path there, from which we did the ever-awesome Right Face - Arrow Face Traverse, just to put a cherry on top of it all. Those of you who have done the RF-AF Traverse will know how magical it is, and for those of you who haven't .. it's there every weekend!

A brisk walk down India Venster to the lower cable station (including a short break for Warwick and the other juveniles in the party to ride the Donkey's Back) concluded an amazing walk.

Many thanks to Warwick Board for organising a stunning and enjoyable route. Thanks also to Pete, Nick, Phil, Dion, Bruno, Jeremy, Caroline and Richard for giving such a great atmosphere and remember...it's magical!... it's the magical mountain goat tour!!!



My MSC and Other Animals. Cred: Ernest Fraczak

A AAAAARGH! SPLASH! - SUICIDE

Date: Tuesday 5th March



Leader: James Cullis

Group: Andrew Ross-Innes, Steve Hancock, Michael Dew, James Cullis, Daphne van Hovell, Marloch Boonstra, Troye Walleth, Rhiannon Thomas, Hedda Schippen, Melanie Townsend, David Guyne-Evans, Brian

Written By: James Cullis

As the sun rose over Cape Town and hundreds of 'varsity students in funny clothes began terrorising local motorists, twelve adventurers collected together with only one thing in mind. To commit Suicide! This was not some new Cult Group from Wacko, Texas, but a bunch of adrenaline junkies looking for an excuse not to sell Sax Appeal.

The walk in seemed long because we were all so keen to get into the gorge. But the fynbos was in full bloom - complete with dozens of perfect King Proteas that added to the already-beautiful mountain.

At last we reached the head of the gorge and in no time at all the shrieks of people hurtling down a moss-covered waterfall were heard echoing through the valley. As I hit the water for the first time, I was very glad that I had a wetsuit in my bag, ready to be used in the gorge. It was freezing!

After half an hour in the sun, body temperatures were somewhere near normal and it was time to move out. Wetsuits were donned and last-minute waterproofing adjustments were made in vain to packs. We began down the river, walking carefully between huge potholes. Michael and Brian could not resist temptation any longer and were

soon throwing themselves into them, pack and all.

Further down-stream, we could hear shrieks and the thuds of bodies hitting water from a group in front of us - the first compulsory jump! The hour of judgement had arrived. Did we have the courage, or stupidity, to look eight metres, straight down, to a small dark pool and throw ourselves into the void? I am pleased to report that nobody hesitated before committing themselves to gravity. The mountain club members have obviously got a healthy dose of madness in their blood.

From then on, it was a case of swim across the pool, boulder - hop for a bit, come to the next jump, throw your pack over and follow it. Just when we were getting used to the jumps, Triple Jump Pools came along where most of the party edged down a ledge to lessen the drop; myself, Michael, Steve and David climbed up for more of a challenge. The result was that the four of us were perched on a ledge 18 meters above the water - nearly twice the height of the other jumps. David followed and then myself. Only after we jumped did we think of reciting the alphabet on the way down. We would probably have got to W.

We decided not to walk the whole way down the river because of the time and the effect the cold water was having on those without wetsuits. We left the river and headed up the hill on a path that became fainter and fainter. We relied on the spirit of the pine trees to tell us the way by spinning a stick. The route which followed the road, won two out of three. Soon we got the feeling that we were being led away from our intended direction. We vowed never to believe a pine tree again or use Andrew's logic. "If two roads diverge in the wood, take the one least trod as the other has been doubly worn by people coming back up it again."

But we persevered and eventually the road took us back to the forestry station. Everybody was smiling on the way home.

The cold water and losing the path had been forgotten and all that we could talk about was the jumps and the tremendous scenery. The 18m jump was probably the craziest thing I have done in my life. I can not wait to do it again!

but innovative improvisation was the order of the day.

Harnesses don't have to be comfortable, only strong!

The rest of the morning took care of itself. So Dave sat up in a tree and munched on his carbo-breakfast.

BEGINNER'S ROCK CLIMBING MEET

PEER'S CAVE, SILVERMINE

Date: 3 March 1996

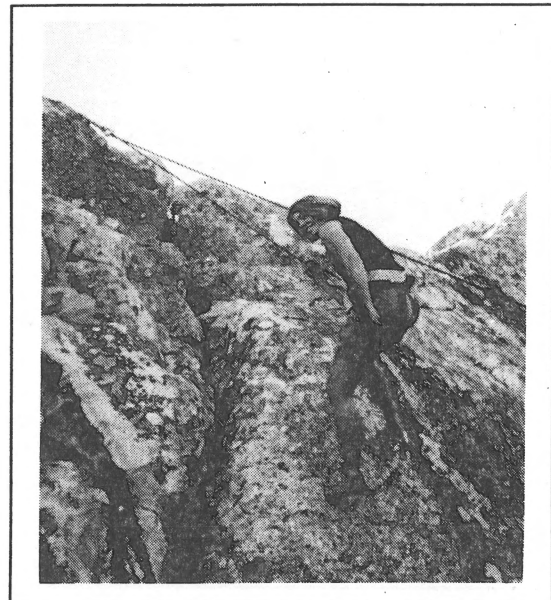
Leader: Dave Pothier

Group: Horde of novice climbers

Written By: Diane Scott

The tranquillity of Peer's Cave was disturbed early one Sunday morning as a horde of novice climbers ascended the hill overlooking Sun Valley. Approximately 25 pairs of little feet made their way along that path. Youthful optimism kept the beginners willing and eager as they sat around, waiting for Dave to arrive with the late comers. Some experienced climbers who 'knew the ropes' presented themselves and cunningly made the first climb appear so simple.

Shoes were thrust off, harnesses whipped on ... and after some 'this is excellent stuff and you won't die' propaganda talk from Dave, the first hesitant novice chalked his hands and showed the rocks what first years are made of. Inhibitions were squashed and minutes later the spectrum of climbs from "Visions of Cosmic Bloom" (Grade 7) to "The Living Daylights" (Grade 16) were covered with limbs and things. Equipment was scarce



"Nina performs the 'flying secretary' trapeeze act." Cred: Dianne Scott

Everyday of climbing has a highlight and this time we got to watch Nina perform the 'flying secretary' trapeeze act. She soared and swore above us.

To avoid inflicting ourselves with 'climber's fingers', the ropes were thrown in around lunch time. The height of pain had been reached.



Hectic Hacking



(l→r) Conrad, Miles, Rod, Jenny, Marc, Dave, James, Roger, Vince, Toby, Bjana, Henty
Cred: Lester Coelen

The Helihack Song

Bye-Bye pine tree you'll have to die,
Before tomorrow when we're off to fly
Now when the Summer's in the air
Little saplings everywhere
Wonder how long they'll still be there

We had joy, we had fun
We were sweating in the sun
And the wine and the song
Like the pinetrees have all gone
-Bjana-



Yummy birthday cake compliments of Axel. (L→r) Rod, Conrad, Vince, Dave,
Axel, Roger, Toby, Jenny, Miles. Cred: James /cullis

Tree-feller gets the chop

The Argus Foreign Service

MUNICH. — Bavarian police have finally chopped the activities of a phantom tree-feller who took out his anger on arboreal targets whenever he had problems with his girlfriend.

The 60-year-old is suspected of chopping down 130 young trees during the past five years, causing damage valued at 40,000 German marks (about R120 000).

odd spot

He was arrested by police near the latest scene of devastation, in which 17 trees were toppled.

A police spokesman in Ansbach, northern Bavaria, said the arrested man confessed that he reached for an axe whenever he had a row with his girlfriend.

He then took out his frustration on trees.



Roger, James, Trevor, Ray and Ernest (The Boogieman)
"We're going slightly mad!" Cred: Jenny Greenwood

Ernest the Lumberjack demonstrates his
proficiency. Cred: Ray Greenwood



Oryx - December '93 pine hack
Cred: Jeremy Wakeford



Roger cuts the last tree of the December '96
Heli-Hack . RIP 35 year old Corporal.
Cred: James Cullis

SILVERMINE ROCK CLIMBING

Date: Sunday 24th March

Leader: Andrew Ross-Innes

Group: 22 Climbers

Written By: Andrew Ross-Innes

What a great turnout - 17 climbers who all squeezed into three cars and off we went.

It was really hot but this did not stop us. Club ropes were used to put up two top ropes on grades 15 and 18. Most people got to do at least one of these whilst the more experienced climbers climbed the harder grades, most of which were low twenties. We had two American exchange students, who both did the 15. Another five people met us at the crag around lunch time, which swelled our numbers to 22 - the most people I have ever seen at

the crag. At any one time, there were at least five ropes up.

Everyone enjoyed a good days climbing and all gained experience.

NOT QUITE CLIMBING AT THE MINE

BUT ALMOST!

Date: 5 AUGUST 1996

Leader: Andrew Ross-Innes

Group: Cecil Roos, Dylan Schwilk, Ross McDonald, Steve "Noddy" Hancock, Melissa Le Fevre

Written By: Ross McDonald

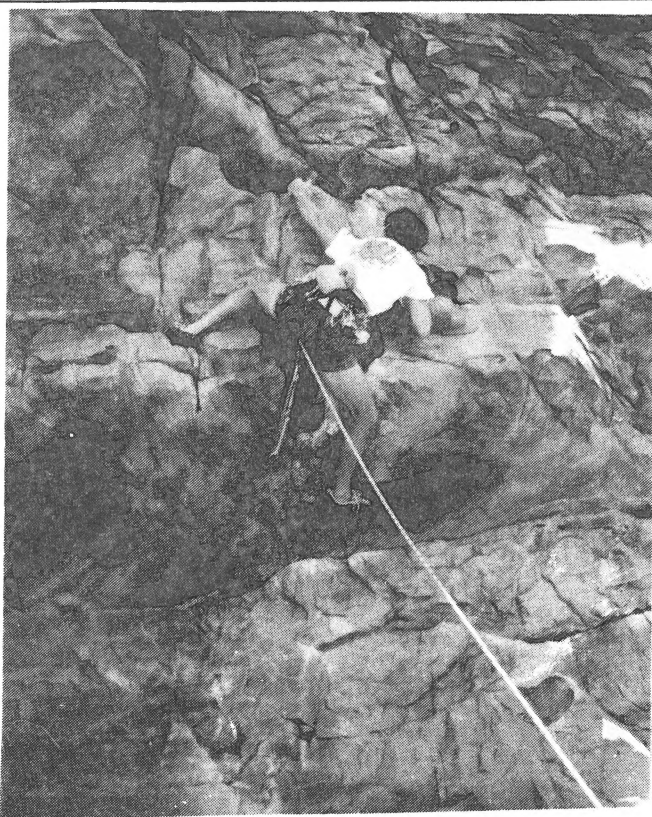
The day dawned bright and clear, an almost summerlike South-Easter blew gently over False Bay cooling the warm orange sandstone of Lakeside Flake.

With a range of lower end routes (grades, not stars), this is just the place for a mellow day of top roping and easy leading. New to the country and the rock was Dylan Schwilk, a Californian exchange student in South Africa for six months. What a pity more of you didn't come on the climb to meet this guy!

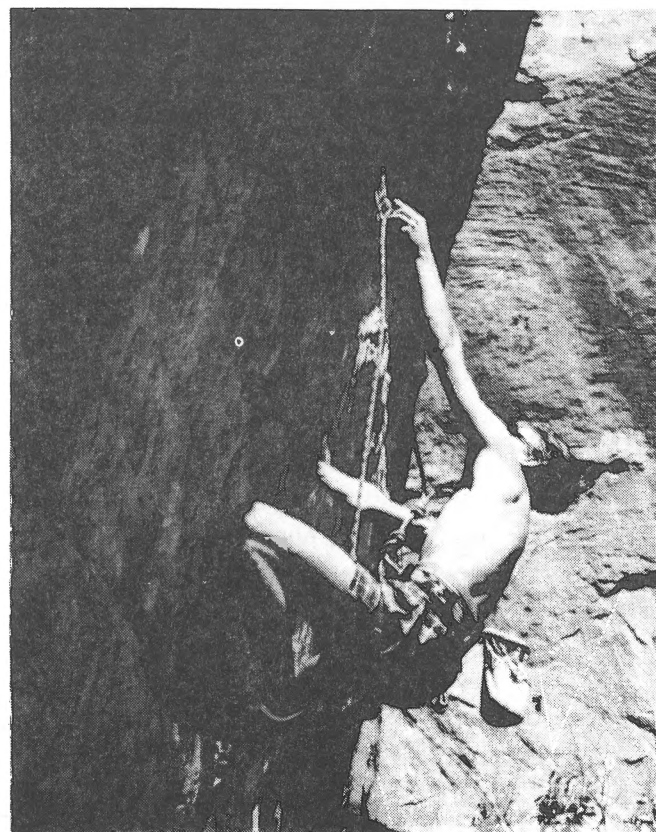
A very relaxing 5 hours were spent top roping, leading (and soloing) five star routes - just what the doctor ordered, especially after all that rain.



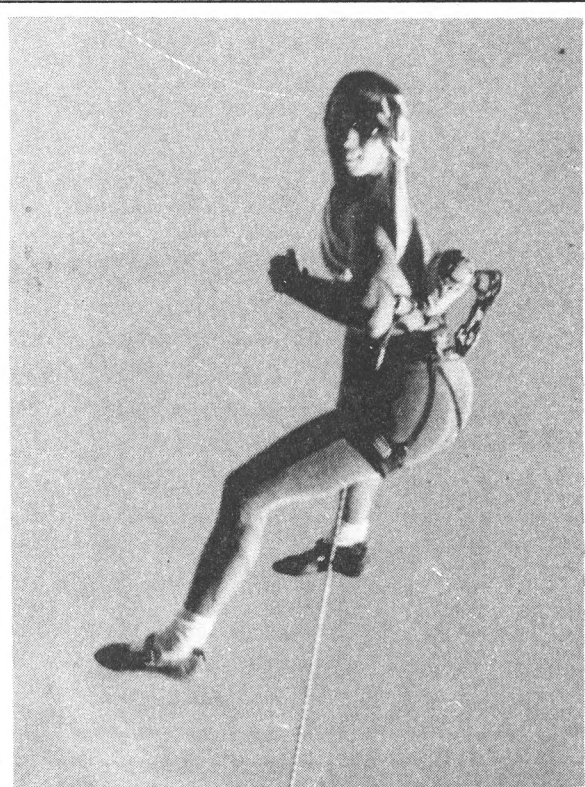
Cred: Jayson Orton



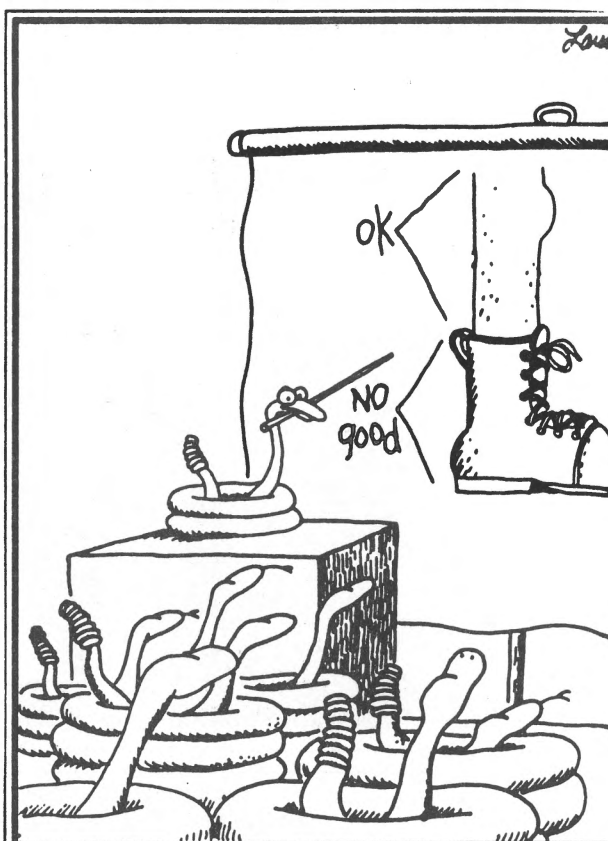
Andrew Ross-Innes. Cred: Ross McDonald



Andrew flashing Cedar Range. Cred: Ross McDonald



Ross McDonald. Cred: Andrew Ross-Innes



CEDERBERG HIKE 9 TO 12 APRIL



Date: 9-12 April 1996

Leader: Jeremy Wakeford

Route: Algeria→Sederhoutkop
→Swemgat →Middelberg→
Algeria

Group: Jeremy Wakeford, David Acott, Phil Ginsberg, Geeta, Dominik Rudmann, Robert, Bruno, Tanya Doherty, Nienke van Schaik, Tilman Stasch, Ursula and James

enjoyable, interesting, manageable and safe. One can never be sure that water supplies or shelter will be adequate. Factors such as these, as well as the fitness of the group, necessitate much consideration and a flexible approach on the hike. However, it is these elements of the wilderness experience which I enjoy so much. The comparative hardships are conducive to a strong spirit amongst the group. This particular motley crew, gathered from far-flung, exotic corners of the globe, gelled very well; hilarity abounded. It was an absolute pleasure to lead this bunch of great people over the hills and dales of the rugged and awe-inspiring Cederberg.

The worst time for me was during the first evening. Darkness descended far too rapidly, the icy wind cut through the most trusted garments, but, worst of all, there seemed to be a jinx on our stoves (I thought my little finger was going to drop off after the tap broke off a gas stove I was refueling and the liquid leaked onto my hand). The best moments were these: frigid dips in swemgat and crystal pool; jokes and massages in the evenings; songs en

L EADER'S REFLECTIONS

Leading a hike in a wilderness area, such as the Cederberg, presents an array of challenges not encountered on your standard trail. A great deal of preparation is required, since one has to devise a route which will be



(Left→Right): Back: Jeremy, Robert, Tilman
Middle: Phil, Nienke, Dave Front: Bruno, Dominik
Cred: Dave Acott

route; surprising a pair of klipspringer; and the pure joy of imbibing the stunning scenery and remoteness. Not to be forgotten, of course, were the incidents when having a "Boulder" pack took on a whole new meaning. After struggling up a hill and across a plateau in the heat of the day, unable to understand how a laid-back lunch could leave me feeling so lethargic, I opened my pack to extricate my camera. Lo and behold, I discovered a devilishly big rock (at least 3kgs)! But that's not all: on the last morning, I found stones in all (in)conceivable nooks and crannies in my pack, including in my running shoes strapped to the outside. David, beware!

JEREMY WAKEFORD

Keen leaders on a hike are great especially when you've been asked to write the article and they conjure up well written reports for you. So, instead of repeating things already said I'll just fill you in with some behind-the-scenes information.

The first night was one to remember. After arriving at the Sleepad hut, Jeremy mentioned a rock shelter that he wanted to get to. Most of us were keen for an adventure and happily went on the 3km ramble along the jeep track to reach it. When it turned out to be an absolutely freezing evening, there were some serious regrets that we hadn't stayed in the comfort of the hut!

Our gas stoves were, as Jeremy said, "jinxed"...some didn't work, others went up in flames and others were disastrous on refueling - all in all supper was rather miserable. Ursula, Tanya and I headed off to bed as soon as we could and squashed up into an area that would be considered small for two people! When there is a choice between warmth or comfort, it's not difficult to understand why we chose what we chose. The guys obviously thought this rather odd and so we heard about it for the rest of the trip!

Needless to say no-one emerged from their sleeping bags until the weak sun had started defrosting us and we felt that it was safe to leave the warmth of our beds. The second day was a very relaxed, yet scenic walk. David and I successfully planted a rock in Jeremy's rucksack after his comments the day before that he hoped we weren't planning anything of the sort. That's what you get for tempting fate. Fortunately for him our destination, Swemgat, was a mere 10 minute walk away. We couldn't believe our luck when we managed to remove the rock without Jeremy noticing that it had been there. Most of us braved the cold water of the pool at Swemgat but as David so rightfully said "Swemgat is not much of a gat, and does not allow for much of a swem either".

"Crystal pools", our destination on the third day was definitely a better swimming spot and we lay there baking in the sun for at least an hour. Lunch provided us with a perfect opportunity to try the rock episode again - unfortunately this time it was actually discovered!!!

We traced a fair part of the path back to Middelberg where we'd had lunch on the first day. Before reaching the hut, Jeremy convinced us to climb Protea Peak. "It's a 45 minute return walk" is what we were told. Up to that point Jeremy had been fairly accurate in his predictions but 60 minutes later, we had not reached the top. Fortunately the view from the peak was fantastic (and definitely worth all the bundu bashing involved).

Day four was the longest and hottest day by far - and obviously also a less traveled route, as the paths were initially of poor quality. When, after the first few kilometers, Jeremy said he doubted whether there was water for the next 11 kilometers, we doubted him...little did we know! Lunch was an interesting affair. Everyone was keen to finish off their food. With almost nothing to drink no-one was too keen to eat anything too sweet or salty.

Incredibly thirsty, but saving every drop of water we had, we plodded on in the pelting sun. Just as we were starting to fear that we'd turn into biltong before getting back to base camp, we heard the welcome sound of water gurgling over rocks. With our thirsts quenched we strolled along the jeep track, through the forests back to Algeria. There we swam and lazed around in the sun and generally ignored the "no hikers" signs in the ablution blocks.

We ended the hike with pizza at Baccinis (I'm amazed that they actually let us in considering how dirty our clothes were!), followed by drinks at Jeremy's place.

Who will forget:

Two medical students, one nurse and a concerned leader all trying to do their bit for Ursula and the piece of grit she had in her eye

Jeremy, and the new meaning of "Boulder" backpacks

Phil, who insisted on swimming naked James, our walking vendor machine.. he was handing out incredible amounts of food even until the last day

Tilman, who was very skilled when it came to trading food - perhaps he should do a business degree instead of medicine

Nienke, who decided to bring along a bear as a pillow (I was very surprised that no-one had the initiative to kidnap my bear - all he got was lots of attention and great concern as to how he was strapped onto my pack)

Bruno, the only person who David says he has seen opening a tin of bully beef, eating half, and then closing the tin and sealing it with packaging tape

David, and his stories of his epic mid winter hikes in the Drakensberg

What David had to say about himself was "Who can forget his jokes? Who can forget his pranks, who can forget him?" No comment.

Spending the final days of the April vac in the Cederberg was an excellent idea. It was relaxing and magnificently scenic.

NIENKE VAN SCHAİK

CHAPMANS PEAK DAY HIKE

Date: Sunday 25th February 1996.

Leader: Conrad Vermeulen

Group: First timers and others

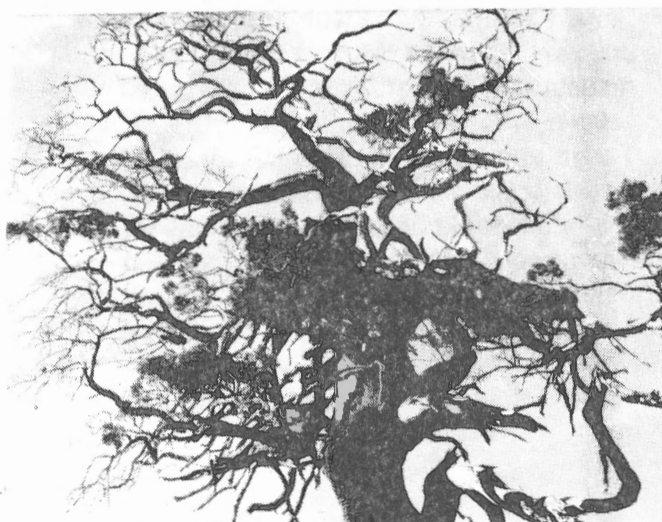
Written By: Janet Allsopp

The Chapmans Peak hike is a must for beginners. For many of the hikers, it was their first with the Club and would definitely not be their last.

With great expectations we left the info centre and drove along the scenic route to the base of Chapmans Peak. Conrad, our leader was great at sorting out all the usual lift and meeting hassles.

He took us at a moderate pace to the trig. beacon at the top of the peak where there were breathtaking views on all sides. The wind was beginning to pick up so we decided to make our way down. On the way we had time to marvel again at the scenery and have a closer look at many of the Ericas and other fynbos plants in flower.

Many of our group were foreigners and Chapmans Peak was a great introduction to the Cape Mountains. The Hike fell under the 'short and scenic' category, which left us eager to climb the next mountain.



KNOW YOUR FLORA

Cape Fynbos

The word fynbos denotes a geographical plant unit - the distinctive temperate flora found within the Mediterranean-type climate of the South-Western Cape. Fynbos is noted for its wealth of species and the high degree of endemism (restricted distribution) of many of the species.

There are three types of plants characteristic of the fynbos ...

- * "The Cape Reeds" or **Restionaceae** appearing as tufted plants with near leafless, tubular or wiry stems.
- * The "ericoids" or shrubs with small narrow rolled leaves (such as the **Ericas** and **Cliffortia** or "climber's friend").
- * The taller shrubs with large showy flowers (such as the **Proteas**, **Leucospermums** (pincusions) and **Leucadendrons**).

The Pine

Pinus Radiata (radiata pine) originates from Southern California. The seedlings are planted in the winter months when there is high rainfall. In commercial plantations the trees receive many silvicultural treatments after planting, such as fertilising, weed control, prunings and thinnings. The trees are then clear felled at about 40 years. The timber is used mainly for structural timber, for use in the building industry and for the manufacture of furniture. The timber is also used for the manufacture of veneer, for poles and for chip board.

The Yellowwood Tree

The real Yellowwood or **Podocarpus latifolius**, is one of the country's well known forest species. The common name is derived from the light colour of its wood which is popular for furniture. As the seeds of this tree mature, they turn reddish-purple, acquire a sweetish taste and are attractive to birds, bats and other wild life. Because of the Yellowwood's rather slow growth and demanding site requirements it is not often commercially cultivated.

The common or Outeniqua Yellowwood, **Podocarpus falcatus** is also a very important timber-producing tree. The leaves have a spiral arrangement and twist at the base. They differ from the leaves of the real Yellowwood.

The Oak Tree

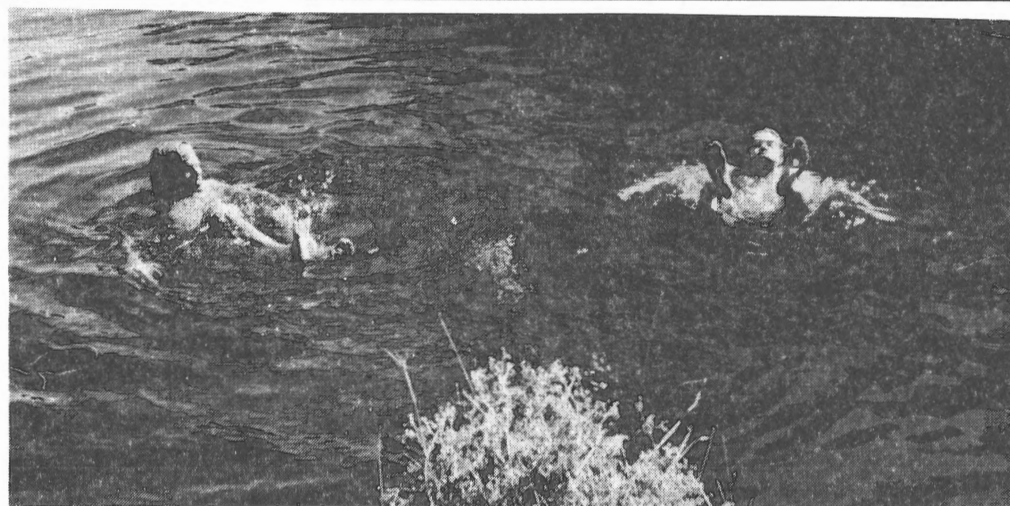
The gracious evergreen oak, **Quercus canariensis** or Algerian oak grow too slowly for afforestation purposes. However, in the winter rainfall area, on favourable sites, they develop a magnificent crown. **Quercus canariensis** is therefore planted for shade and ornamental purposes. This species occurs naturally in the Canary Islands, Spain and North America.

Information received from S.A.F.C.O.L. - The Tokai Nature Trail

LEISURE ON THE BERG



"Die Manne" getting a tan in the snow in Matroosberg. (L→r) Ewen, Pete, James, Dave
Cred: James Cullis



Tilman and Jeremy - aqua- aerobics in the Cedarberg
Cred: David Acott



"Who needs ski's when our torso's can do the job?" Ewen, Anthony, Dave and Johan. Skiing in the Matroosberg. Cred: Karen

The Discovery of Hoare Hut's Magic

With today being Heritage Day
We thought there might just be a way
To miss lectures in the week
And instead go up to Waaihoek Peak.

On Sunday afternoon we set off
and met a party who'd been rather dof -
They'd left their car keys in the hut's door
and climbing back left the leader sore.

Finally we found our first patch of snow
and gave snow-ball fights a jolly good go
At last I was greeted with the view
Of Hoare Hut and its famous loo.

On Monday we attempted to ski
(With lessons from James absolutely free!)
Amidst the falls, the bruises and a wet bum
I had the most amazing fun!

I will definitely be here when next there's snow
To give skiing down the slopes another go,
an evening of laughter was set into motion
with David's Gluwein and Rebecca's magic potion.

With clouds coming over we bid the Hut goodbye,
Judith, Mike, James, David, Rebecca and I.
My first time at Waaihoek, what an adventure it's been
Hoare Hut's the best place that I've ever seen.

Nienke van Schaik

(Extract from the Logbook,
22 - 24 September 1996)

CONQUERING KARBONKELBERG

Date: Sat 27 April

The Captain: Jeremiah
Wakeford

The Crew: Long Johan Silver (Kunнемeyer-without you), First Mate Simon Timmins (or First Rate Scrambler with Delirium Tremens), Fabulous France (from France!) Paul (The King) Leroy, Phil(istine) Ginsberg (or should that be Rumsberg?), Jacqui (The Flame) Middlewick, Berdine (codeine-consuming) v.d. Linden, Alissa (not from Milano) Lang, Ana (is that milk chocolate? No, ...) Salbany, Veronika Barth (or have you had yours for the year?), Birgit (No, not Beergut) Ernie.

The Mutineers (Mutant Ears): Tor (I've ben (everywhere) Wiborg (Whosponsors?), Warren (I haven't) Hurd (the orders).

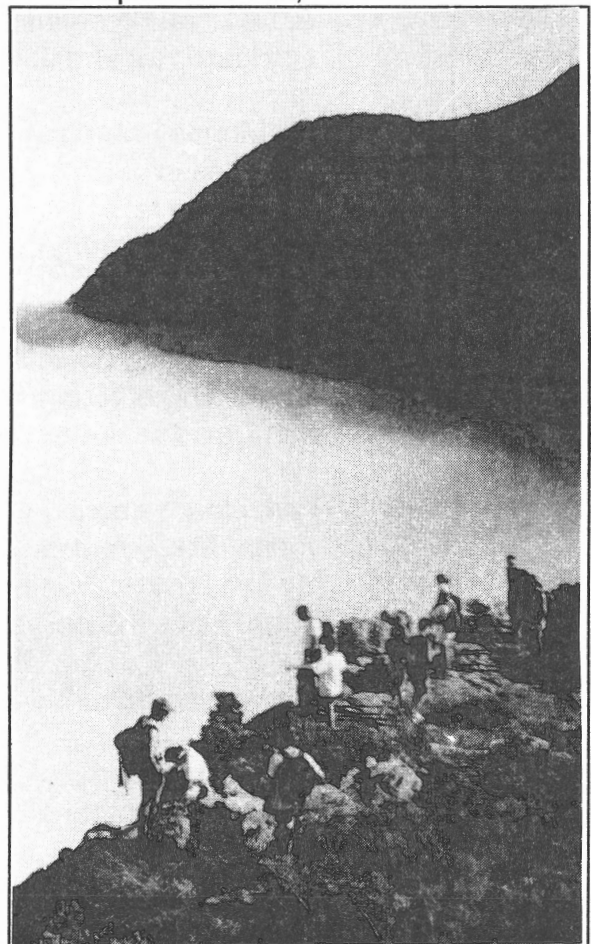
Written By: Jeremiah Wakeford

The Karbonkelberg rose out of the sea of mist like a fairy-tale castle surrounded by a surreal moat. The cool, white veil obliterated all traces of the Atlantic ocean - barring the quaint fishing village straddling the lower slopes of the Sentinel. Our moistened faces angled upwards and eyes straining for a glimpse of our treasure, the eager band of fourteen explorers strode purposefully up the winding track.

'Twas not long before the Captain called a halt; a diversion to the Long Drop was in order. I know what you're thinking, but you're wrong; the Long Drop has no connotation of a bodily function - other than a short, sharp drawing in of breath as one peers over the edge of the world

(not unlike the hero in "The Gods Must be Crazy"). 'Twas indeed an awesome spectacle, a plunge the height of five tall masts ending in that primordial swamp of fog, with the crash of waves on the shore reverberating up the sheer walls of rock.

But there was scant time to linger, for the real bounty lay ahead, further up the snaking path and past the desolate ruins of a long-forgotten look-out station. As the mist rolled back from the wave-battered shore far below, the merry band came upon the much-vaunted summit of the Karbonkelberg and glory shone around. Nary a swig from the canteen, nor a spongy marshmallow could divert the raptured gazes of the party from the spellbinding panorama: Lion's Head and its closer, littler namesake, Table Mountain, Hout Bay, Constantiaberg, Chapman's Peak, and the immense



"The Karbonkelberg rose out of the sea of mist like a fairy-tale castle surrounded by a surreal moat". Cred: Jeremiah Wakeford

Atlantic Ocean which benevolently supported insignificant craft.

After a hearty brunch, the motley crew struck off to conquer new territories - this time Suther Peak, overlooking the infamous Sandy Bay. After a skirmish with rogue fynbos, we came upon a flat, grassy patch (which could be a Martian landing site), and a large boulder presented itself and asked to be climbed; Simon and Jeremy complied in various ungainly fashions. And then the peak was taken, with no hands lost (just yet).

It was upon the descent, the treasure safely captured (by instamatix and zoom), that the most sacrilegious mutiny occurred. Two greedy scoundrels conspired to bag the forbidden prize, the Karbonkelberg beacon (unaware of their folly). And so it came to pass that the crew was cleft in twain, the dirty dozen scurrying back to their get-away vehicles and safety. On the way, some of the band beckoned toward Kaptein's Peak, but the answer was: "Nah, me harties, the sun is low in the sky and it's farst approaching the tame to splice the main brace (at Forries); we'll have to do it another tame!"

Upon reaching the chariots, the two renegade members had not returned; feared consumed by the forces of darkness unleashed by the anger of an unjustly trammled hillock, they were never to be seen again (... until the next meeting of the legendary MS.)

J ONKERSHOEK

Date: Sunday 10 March

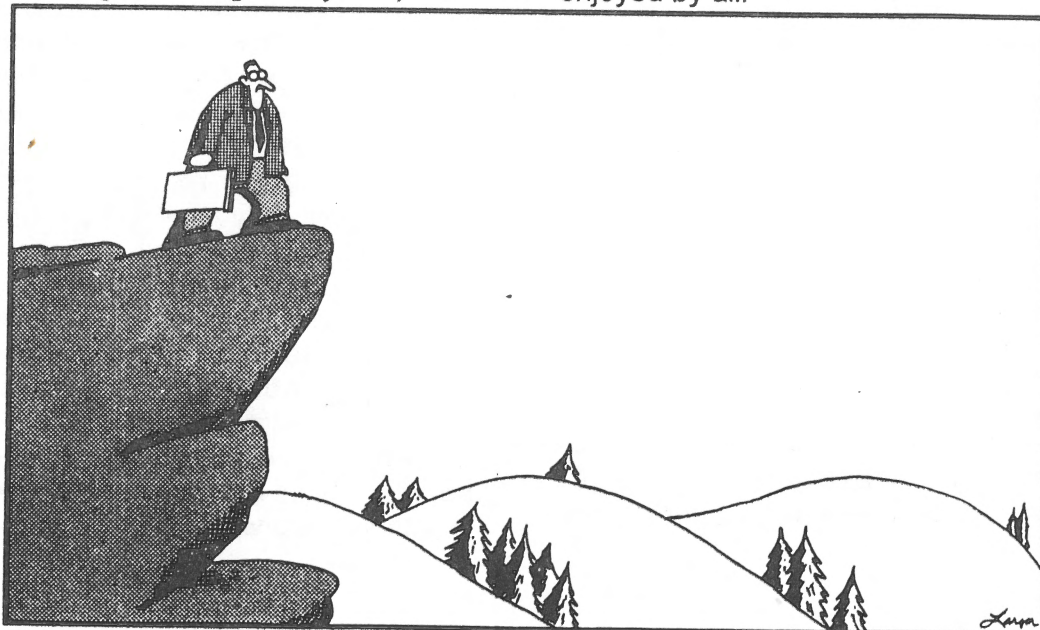
Leader: Ray Greenwood

Group: 7 Members

Written By: Joanne Boule

After admitting that he had never led a day walk in the Jonkerskloof area, Ray suggested that we change our plans and take an easier walk on one of the trails though the nature reserve instead. After our arrival, we noticed the evidence of the fire which had caused much destruction, so we decided to follow the trail which didn't go through the area of burnt vegetation. It proved to be a spectacular hike and, although the walk up involved some fairly steep parts as well as some boulder-hopping in the gully, the view from the top made the uphill all worthwhile.

Having underestimated the time it would take to complete the hike, we were running late, and were forced to begin the return trip almost immediately. As a first-time hiker with the mountain club, it was really wonderful to get away and enjoy a day in such a beautiful part of the Cape, far from university, practicals and studying. It was definitely a day enjoyed by all.



Seymour Frishberg: Accountant of the Wild Frontier

HOARE HUT'S 25TH BIRTHDAY PARTY



GROUP: Old timers: Lance Mitchell, Pietra Corgatelli, Mike Wright, Mike Morris, John & Lynn Moss, Bruce Mortimer, Charles & Corrinne Merry, Johan & Joy Hauser, Dale Lewis, Wayne Barnes, Sally Ross, Julian Hobbs, Pierre Hoffa, Ian Bradburn, Martin Hutton-Squire, Patrick Hurley, Joan Louwrens, Morgan Behr, Mo Oliver, Johnny & Cherry Hutton-Squire and Co., Axel Holscher, Chris Walker, Brian de Villiers and Co., Ked Lee, Heather Smithers, Dermot Gordon-Graham, Alasdair Keen, Will van Drie.

Current folk: Roger Diamond, Paul Leroy, Rebecca Gray, Celeste Cullen, Andrew Lewis.

Cred: Celeste Cullen

Date: 11 & 12 May 1996

Organizer: Celeste Cullen

Written By: Celeste Cullen

Menu: Beef Stroganoff and rice,
Tiramisu.

The occasion of Hoare Hut's 25th birthday was as good an excuse to have a party as any. Each year on the anniversary of the opening of Hoare Hut, a birthday party is held. This year, as with the 21st birthday, the folk who built the hut were invited to come and celebrate with us. Invitations were sent in August 1995 to

these hut builders, and the succeeding Hut Convenors each year.

This year we had people come from Turkey, USA and New Zealand as well as many local folk. In total 45 people attended; this being quite a squeeze for Hoare Hut, several tents were pitched outside. A few 'hard cores' decided to spend the night in Pell's Hut, 'just like they used to', when they were building Hoare Hut. Pell's Hut was looking rather smashing in it's fresh roof paint, new mattress covers, stainless steel counters, and general spruce up for the party. Sadly these people were some of the last people to see Pell's in this way, as winter storms had the better of the 'improved' Pell's Hut shortly afterwards.



President: John Moss and his wife Lynn.
Thanks to John for his constant support.
Cred: Pierre Hoffa

As usual, sundowners were enjoyed at Waaihoek peak, while dinner was being rustled up. A Pre-dinner musical was provided for the rather merry folk by Wayne Barnes who played many of the old tunes from the song book.

Young and old enjoyed this, while large quantities of whiskey and 'snake-bite', wine, port and beers were "quaffed". A very jolly Pietro (a master chef) was so impressed with the dinner preparations and the fact that there would be proper pudding at this party, he proceeded to propose marriage to the cooks, including Alasdair!

After some serious noshing, post-dinner entertainment was provided by Mr 'Frankenfurter' Diamond, who gave us a very animated rendition of "Time Warp" and "Sweet Transvestite"! Not bad considering he was, as usual quite stone cold sober! The party this year was not any worse off for the sad lack of the "Hurl" Brothers, and other memorable folks.

During my time at UCT, Hoare Hut has become a treasured and valuable place to me, as it has to many others. Building a hut on Zuurberg is no easy task, requiring dedication, blood, sweat and tears. It was wonderful to be able to thank some of the people responsible and to share their memories and stories with them. So many people have special memories of Waaihoek and Hoare Hut, and passing on the stories, songs and games to the current members of the club is an important way to keep traditions alive and continue the character of the Hut.

I look forward to future re-unions, when I will also be able to pass on my stories, and delight in the appreciation of the Hut by the current users.

Pell's Hut was to be celebrating it's 60th anniversary in 1997, however this is not to be. Here's hoping that at that stage work will have commenced to rebuild Pell's back to fine form.



Charles and Corrinne Merry. Thanks to Charles for doing a super job as president of the club in John's absence. *Cred: Pierre Hoffa*

T HE PRESIDENT'S ROCK MEET:

TRADITIONAL ROCK CLIMBING ON TABLE MOUNTAIN

Date: 31 March 1966

Leader: John Moss

Group: John Grindley, Roger Diamond, Paul Bartlett, John Moss, Andrew Lewis, Tilman Stasch, Richard Milne, Paul Leroy and others

Written By: John Moss

Traditional rock climbing is climbing with the leader placing his own protection as he goes up. This protection can be in the form of friends, nuts, wedges etc. The last person on the rope retrieves the protection pieces and so the climbers ascend the mountain. Traditional climbing usually takes place on a mountain rock face and the climbs are usually more than one pitch long. This type of climbing is also called "Adventure Climbing" and this is because it is an adventure!

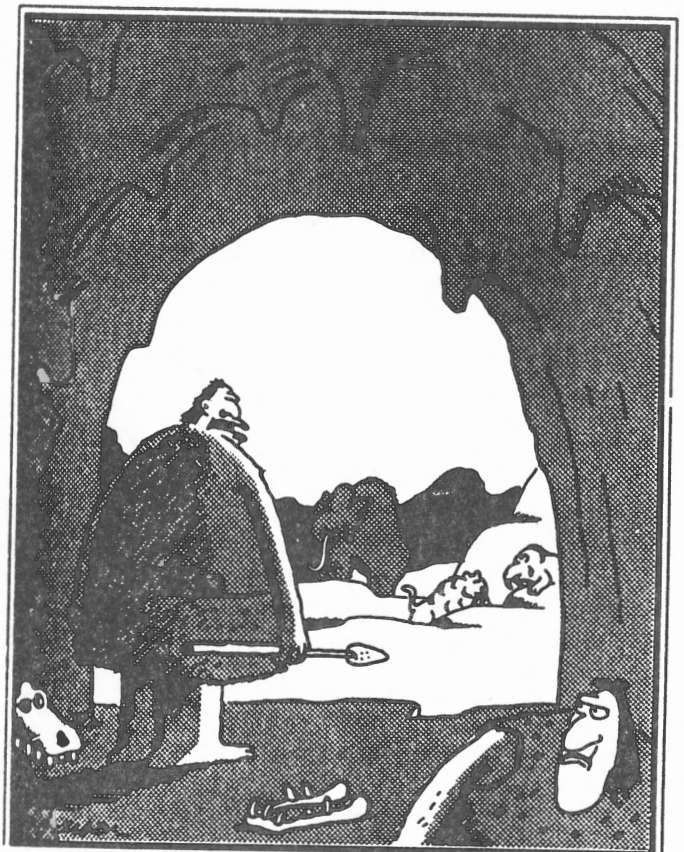
On Sunday 31 March, a group of ten UCT Mountain and Ski Club members left the info centre at UCT to go traditional climbing on Table Mountain. The venues were the 2 buttresses of the 12 Apostles known as Barrier Buttress and Valken Buttress. The party included a past president (John Grindley), the current chairman (Roger Diamond) as well as a past chairman (Paul Bartlett), the current president (the writer), Andrew Lewis and several other MSC members.

Andrew's attempt to locate some of the club's climbing ropes and climbing

harnesses was unsuccessful and this delayed the start. We then drove to the Camps Bay side of the mountain and parked at the top of Rontree Estate, below Kasteel's Poort. At the cars the wind was howling but up at the rock face it was relatively still. We hiked up to Barrier Cave which was sheltered. We split up into 2 parties catering for complete beginners as well as more experienced people. We decided on two classic routes: Barrier Frontal (grade F1) which Andrew led and Valken D for the less experienced, which I led. Both climbs are good quality and involved more than 5 pitches of climbing (about 400 ft or so).

The climbs were enjoyed by all and on the descent an abseil was included to get back to Barrier Cave by lunchtime. It was a good day out, and for some their first experience of rock climbing.

Let's have more climbing adventures in the future!



"Once in a while couldn't we just have some pasta?"



The Amatola Trail: (l→r, back) Sandy Paterson, Tanya Doherty, Nina Veenstra, Karen Lister, Nicola Erasmus, Caroline Poole, Carel Haumann, Colin Davidson (l→r, front) Wendy McKeag, James Cullis, Dominik Rudmann, Jeremy Wakeford, Andrew Goslin, Rinky Vamvadelis, Ianni Vamvadelis



The Vineyard Trail, Stellenbosch, 1 May '96. "Take my advice - don't walk, just stay at the winefarm, after all - it is worker's day."
Cred: Ernest Fraczak

(Below) The Matroosberg SA Skihut:

(l→r) Johan, Karen, Ewen, Anthony, Pete

Cred: James Cullis



ALL ABOARD; THE TSITSIKAMMA TRAIL

Date: 10 September 1996

Group: Nina Veenstra, Celeste Cullen, Alasdair Keen, Jeremy Wakeford, David Acott, Francois de Roubaix, Andrew Swanepoel, Anthea Kisch, Robyn Murray, Alan Thorsen, Angela Drainski, Ewen Findley, Peter Baross, Flint MacGregor, Lesley Arnold, Dunbar Lewis.

Leader: Jeremy Wakeford

Written By: Ewen, Peter and Flint

September 10th was the day it all began. With tired eyes and eager hearts, everyone hit the road early that Tuesday morning. Bound for the mountains around Nature's Valley.....After moving cars over to the Storms River Bridge and collecting the 'Cheerful Trio' from there, the hiking party was finally complete.

That night, the rucksacks were relieved of some of their bulging contents for the first supper. Over the next five days we were to see every form of - dare I say - culinary delight from 'Toppers' and 'Smash' to the likes of custard, green pepper and the soon-to-be-legendary gluwain (the spicy aroma of which I must note seemed to reappear quite frequently over the coming evenings). The rest of the evening was devoted to the developing of acquaintances and a good few zzz's before the next day.

The weather during the trip surprised most in its mildness and we were only cursed with one day of rain.

Friday the 13th began and ended with rain - mostly drizzle, but enough to put more moisture in our clothes and rucksack than in our water bottles. For most, rain gear, ponchos, Drimacs et al. proved all too permeable to the falling rain, leaving everyone except the experienced few (i.e. Celeste and Alasdair - recognizable as those dressed up to the eyeballs in Vent X) totally drenched.

The couple of streams that we were to cross turned out to be slightly larger than we at first anticipated. As we were unable to cross with our packs on, Dave, Jeremy and Alan came up with an ingenious 'float the packs across the river' scheme which admittedly resulted in the transfer of the packs across the river - soggy when they got there. It worked rather well for all the packs, all bar Dunbar's beast which was not unlike the recent Olympic lift and jerk all time record and was obviously of dubious buoyancy. Eventually everyone reached camp and we began the process of drying ourselves, our socks, our sleeping bags, shirts, shorts, ... The evening closed with campfire songs and the first few verses of our All Aboard hiking melody.

Flint 'Chronic Fatigue' MacGregor seemed to find a temporary miracle cure for his somnolence with a morning mission of waking the physio-cum-camelwomen bunch of Nina, Robyn and Anthea up 'vroegies' with steaming mugs of Java. Naturally this was a little difficult to accomplish alone, so the rest of the trio was recruited to help in the distribution. The 'trio' struck a deal and agreed to exchange these early a.m. favours for a little physiotherapeutical assistance with our aches and pains. Oh yes, and then there was the story of Anthea and the forest animal - well, it started one evening when Nina and Anthea decided to brave the elements and sleep under the stars ...

A couple of hours later, Anthea awoke to hear strange grunting sounds coming from very nearby - PANIC!!!- frenzied knocking on the cabin window and several muffled cries for help later (serious minus points on the camelwoman hard-core scale) and Jeremy emerged with a torch, only to identify the source of noise as nothing more than a wild piggy, feasting on some grass near the porch ... "But it was this BIG!!" said Anthea the next morning, gesticulating, - Mmmmmm, well seeing is believing I guess - Grunt, Grunt.

The trail took us from Nature's Valley, up into the interior, east over, round and through several rivers and hill-cum-mountains, bringing us eventually (sixty-something kilometers from where we began) to the Storms River. It passed through some magnificent country from the closed, fern riddled forest to the tree-lined slopes and cold crystal streams. The walking turned out to be not too stressful and everyone handled well - a couple of blisters and a sore knee the only gripes to speak of. The hard-core hikers took it pretty much in their stride, and for others there were a couple of valuable lessons to be learned (less cans next time "trio", and Dunbar, leave the kitchen sink at home).

All in all the hike turned into quite an epic experience, just the thing to ease the way into the final part of the year, nice to forget (what day is it Alasdair?) all the 'Varsity stress for a few days. To all those who braved the Tsitsikamma, thanks for a great trip and all the best for the rest of the year.

Cheers from the Cheerful Trio (Ewen, Peter and Flint).

News Flash: Rumour has it that the "trio" are now acclaimed experts in the night life of Plett, and that Dave can tell you a thing or two about salad bars? ...

HAPPY HACKING



The handsome Hex was full of trees

*That grew amongst the wildest
screees,*

But as they lived and multiplied

*The fynbos simply upped and
died.*

Luckily it had a friend

*Whose mission was to put an
end*

To all the wicked arboreting

That was viciously depleting

The crowning glory of the Cape

Through this relentless floral rape.

He flung himself and 20 more

Into the mountains with a roar,

Expending all his boundless might

Until there was no tree in sight.

Alas the tale does not end here

*For there are little seeds out
there.....*

AnonyMOus





*GPS:

A SATELLITE NAVIGATION TOOL FOR MOUNTAINEERS

If you read old mountaineering journals you will discover that even as recently as the early parts of this century some areas of the Western Cape had not yet been mapped. For example, the Hex River Mountains were relatively unknown and almost totally unexplored. Navigation and route finding in such areas was dependent on a large degree of 'mountain sense', local farmers' knowledge and good luck. With the advent of the aeroplane the whole country was mapped from aerial photographs, and mountaineers now had reliable maps to aid with navigation.

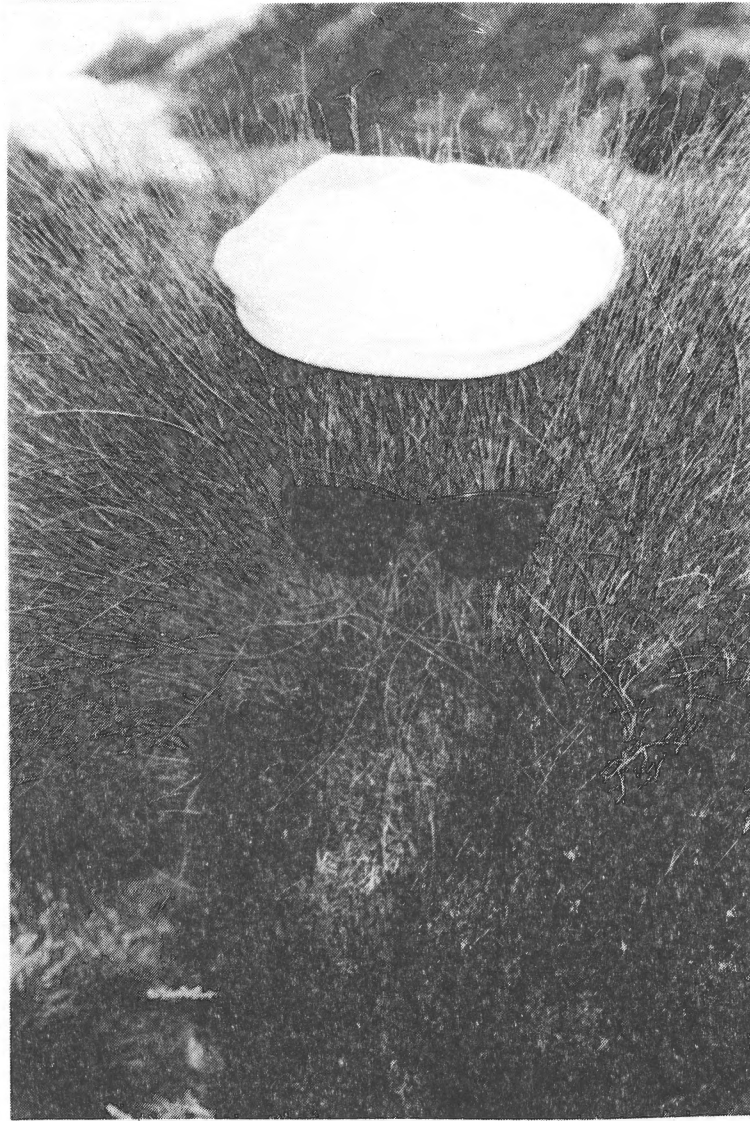
In the 1990's satellite technology has brought about a revolutionary navigation tool in the form of a Global Positioning System (GPS). GPS was designed by the US Department of Defense (it is only proper at this stage to thank the American taxpayers) to provide a system for locating the instantaneous position of a receiver anywhere in the world, at any time of the day or night and in any weather conditions. Although its original purpose was for military uses, GPS is now widely used in the civilian domain.

Very briefly this is how it works: There are currently 24 GPS satellites orbiting the earth at an altitude of 20000 km. At any point on the earth's surface and at any time at least 4 satellites are 'visible' to a GPS receiver. Each satellite transmits signals that can be interpreted by the receiver and translated into a distance between the satellite and the receiver. With a minimum of 4 satellites a latitude, longitude, height and time (which is fundamental to the distance calculations) can be computed. If your height is known then only 3 satellites are required to determine your position.

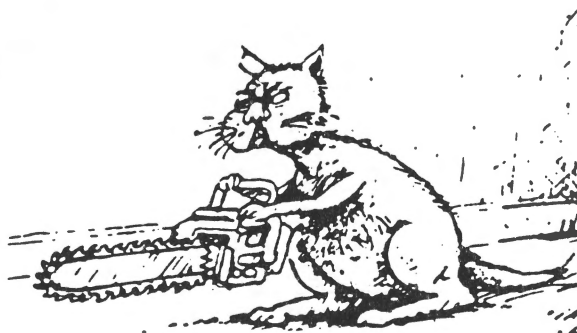
So how does this relate to mountaineering? Firstly, it provides a useful tool for finding out where you are. And secondly, if you know where you want to be, it can navigate you there. Coordinates of points, known as 'waypoints', can be typed in and stored in the receiver's memory. Waypoints are used either to record the locations that you have visited or they can be predetermined positions (from a map) to which you wish navigate. The functions made available by GPS technology are obviously of great benefit if you are lost (oop's, I should not use that 4 - letter word) or your visibility is restricted, for example, by heavy cloud or mist. GPS receivers are amazingly small (just slightly larger than your hand) and are relatively cheap (selling for a little over R1000 for the bottom of the range models). Most hand - held receivers operate off penlight batteries and unlike cell phones there is no cost involved after the unit is purchased. The accuracy of these receivers is approximately 130 meters for horizontal positioning and 150 meters for height. Compared to the accuracy you can get from a standard 1:50000 map, that is pretty good.

For all of these fantastic features there are certain disadvantages: Firstly, you must have a clear view of most of the sky. I.e. there can't be any obstructions (such as trees, cliffs, etc.). This means that the receiver will probably not be able to determine a position in a forest or ravine and certainly not indoors or underground. And secondly, position in a forest or ravine and certainly not indoors or underground. And secondly, the navigator must have a working knowledge of latitude and longitude as well as how to read them off a map.

Although traditionalists may prefer to ignore GPS, regarding it as further unnecessary encroachment of modern technology into a sport where most people want to get away from it all, I consider that its primary function will be to help you find your way either when human error has been involved or when the weather conditions prevent conventional navigation. I am not suggesting that you should forget about your maps, but GPS certainly makes direction finding by compass, stars or sun somewhat redundant.



Strange fellow found on grassy triangle.
Cred: Pierre Hoffa



PIERRE HOFFA



⇒ Group 1

Group: Torben Wiborg, Stuart Finn, Charlotte Engel, Kathy Stothart, Jason Waldon, Troye Wallett, Warren Hurd, Mike Schnobel, Mike Needham, Phil Ginsberg, Simon Orford, Marco Gillesen, Stefan Patten, Ianni Vamvadelis.

Date: Sun 30 June - Sat 6 July

Leader: Pierre Hoffa

Written By: Ianni Vamvadelis

rock faces. Then you tell them that it is an epic hike. The results are astounding. They will flock to the foothills traveling thousands of kilometres and then gaze up to the heights of the escarpment and say things like "Are we going up THERE!?" and for the more hardy and inquisitive "What is that peak called, Pierre, and how high is it.". And then there are the macho ones who are heard to say "Ah that's not so bad. Let's get moving.".

The 1996 Drakensberg hike... a contingency of 14 people started on the trek for 6 days through the stretch of terrain around Cathedral Peak. Most people started out in a happy state. The first day did wonders for the morale and formed a false preconception of ease. On the first night of any hike people find out what they have left behind and have to scrounge around and bum off others.



(Lt→Rt) Simon, Troy, Phil, Stefan, Stuart, Ianni, Jason, Marco, Pierre, Mike, Charlotte, Kathy, Mike S, Torben. Cred: Pierre Hoffa

How do you get 13 guys and 2 girls to climb over 3000 metres in freezing conditions with the threat of a great snowfall? First of all, you consult the mad megalomaniacs of the UCT Mountain and Ski club and you tell them about the Drakensberg and its magnificent views and sheer

Day two started in good spirits. Little did we know that it was to be an entire day of UPHILL - and not gentle. It made the hike to Hoare Hut feel like a Sunday stroll. However, as we gained altitude, the views became phenomenal. The Natal Midlands must rate as one of the most beautiful areas

in South Africa and from the Drakensberg escarpment it takes on an added beauty. Some ignorant people think the closer you get to the sun the warmer it becomes. THEY ARE WRONG. As we summited the gorge adjacent to the Organ Pipes, we were blasted by a freezing wind which cursed us with its presence for four of the six days.

The night of day two echoed itself with a few differences throughout the hike. A wind sharp enough to remove skin layers after it has frozen them. Temperatures low enough to freeze the water bottle lying next to you in the tent. Meals of Toppers and noodles (at least for me). Some people have learnt the art of cooking in the wild. I am not one of them. In my ignorance and due to a low budget I decided to have six nights of T and N. A mistake that almost cost me my sanity. A tip for those who haven't learned yet - Toppers is not a good idea (and that is putting it mildly). Mana mince also needs a mention. It rates higher than Toppers but causes interesting and odorous side effects and should be sold with a spade.

The morning of day three started in permafrost. The idea of working in minus a hundred chill factor is to get moving as fast as possible and hope the sun offers some warmth when it eventually appears. The mission was to summit Cleft Peak (3120 m) and drink the Windhoek that was weighing down Jason's pack. This was all achieved with joy and the Windhoek tasted ever so good.

The days, from this point, just run into one another and the experiences mingle into one, causing my chronological order to deteriorate.

The nights, as I have said, were freezing but we handled it by fitting ten people into a single three man tent. With bulging sides and straining guy ropes, the conversation deteriorated to remarkable degrees and had to be censored for this article.

The loss of sanity reached its pinnacle when one or two of us got the inspiration to seize the day and go for a swim in a nearby pond. After finding a pool that wasn't covered in ice, and serious psyching up, we took the plunge and it was this cold. None the less it returned us to our senses cold but refreshed. Nothing like tingling skin after a long days hike!

South peak was summited and the source of the Orange River contaminated, preceding the descent down Mweni Cutback. A lethal downhill (judging by the donkey skeletons) that turned hardened legs to jelly. A note for prospective Drakensberg hikers: Mweni Cutback is not a route to walk up unless you never wish to return!!

The last day was a fitting end to the entire ordeal. The night was spent in the foothills at a 30 degree angle on the flattest slope we could find. The wind was not as harsh down at that altitude and so a couple of us did the under the stars sleeping thing. The next morning saw the prospect of a twenty four kilometer walk ahead and the promise of non-hiking food and showers. But the weather looked ominous. Huge storm clouds were forming on the horizon and we were walking right into them. As walking in rain "sux", I did not relish the idea and when we stopped to waterproof ourselves I was not a happy man. My irritation turned to joy as the first snowflake fell. About 10 cm fell while we were walking and turned the landscape into a white wonder. We walked in snow for about two hours and then in slush for another four. But the high the snow had created lasted about that long and so no worries.

Back in the Cathedral Peak hotel, sipping Amarula Cream with a braaied steak in my stomach was bliss. My legs ached but, after I had washed six days of dirt (and the tan I thought I had acquired) off, I felt good.

All that is left for me to say is "Ah, it's not so bad. Let's get moving!"



⇒ Group 2

Group: Ross MacDonald, Andrew Goslin, Andrew Marshall, Geoff McQuaid, Warwick Board, Paul Macey, Sonja van Essen, Melissa le Ferve, Carel Haumann, Ralph Walker, Pete Hartley, Roger Diamond, Richard Allen, Craig Hutcheson, James Lockley, Roger Maitland

Date: 29th June

Leader: Roger Diamond

Written By: Warwick Board

Mountaineering In The Cathedral Peak Area

After several interesting notices, a meeting held in the North Council Room at UCT; frantic scurrying around to obtain all the necessary items needed for the hike and heavy sponsoring of Cape Union Mart, the big day arrived - Saturday 29th June. The wagon trains were assembled at the crack of dawn and the Great Trek across the hinterland of South Africa began - DESTINATION; THE DRAKENSBERG!

After a harrowing drive along the pothole infested N5 to Bethlehem (turning off the N1 at Winburg), several hikers decided to camp over at the Glen Reenen campsite (Golden Gate National Park). Countless good omens including an early morning sighting of a bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) and a spectacular aerial display by an adult male black eagle (*Aquila verreauxii*) observed from the top of the

Brandwacht cliff, were enjoyed on the Sunday.

A short drive through Qwa-Qwa and past the Sterkfontein dam and there it was, Quathlamba (the barrier of spears), the very sight of these magnificent soaring basalt cliffs was awe-inspiring. After the initial euphoria had slightly subsided, the sight of Cathedral Peak elicited comments that revolved generally around the "oh boy" theme. The brooding walls of the mighty Cleft Peak did nothing to alleviate this state of apprehension.

A small grove of trees formed the shelter within which we pitched camp on the Sunday with the Cathedral range providing an apt and fitting backdrop. The two different routes were outlined and the group of hikers split into two parties - one group going with Pierre Hoffa on a marathon summit hike and the other going with Roger Diamond on a mountaineering extravaganza (the subject of this article).

An early start to the Monday was required if we were to accomplish our goal of climbing Cathedral Peak (3004m, 10km away, starting at 138m) and pitch camp (2490m). The vehicles were parked at the Hotel entrance gate and most of the party (except that Peter Hartley rat with the who opportunistically and with all of the grace of a prima donna floated onto the back of a passing tractor) walked to the start of the trail. The tall summit cone of Cathedral loomed impressively in the distance as ominous clouds billowed together in the southeast, heralding an impending storm. A few inquisitive Cape Vultures circled in the sky above.

An awesome campsite was reached on the summit of the lower of two platforms protruding out to the East from the Orange Peel Gap side of Cathedral Peak. There were still 514m left to climb, including Orange Peel Gap and a series of traverses and

'B'grade pitches, leading to a rickety ladder and on to the summit.

Some of the climbers were enthusiastic about reaching such a major free standing peak in the Natal Drakensberg. Paul Macey decided that a sleep was in order and snored his approval.

Apart from the fair degree of exposure on that airy summit, the views assisted in robbing what little breath was left over from the slog up. Eastern Buttress and the Inner Tower Buttress split in two by the Devil's Tooth and its attendant toothpick far to the north (about 26km) were just discernible. Looking down the ridge we were going to traverse below on the following day, the Bell, Outer and Inner Horns, Chessmen and the Mitre could be seen. What a day to be alive, and what a place to be alive in!

A frozen waterfall was found at the base of Orange Peel Gap. A water shortage was developing and the some of the ice was collected and melted for water.

The following day saw a return to the ice waterfall and after sufficient water was obtained, the party ascended to the neck above the Gap and began the treacherous descent down a boulder-strewn and dangerously loose gully (aptly known as Bugger Gully - although it was probably christened with a host of other names during the descent). Several rocks (more like massive boulders) were accidentally dislodged and quick thinking by Peter Hartley and awesome gymnastic ability by Sonya van Essen prevented them from joining the remains of a cow down in the valley below.

A fine lunch stop (after a tricky step over with a rather alarming drop), included a magnificent view of the Bell, and a raucous conversation with fellow primates on the other side of the valley (RaHooo).

A savage (there is no adjective better qualified in this case) crank up an equally ferocious ravine led to the saddle between the Twins and the

Mitre. This was followed up by another atrocious path leading up the upper sections of the Mlambonje (hungry dog) pass. The escarpment was finally reached and another impressive campsite was found, on the banks of the Kwakwatsi river (2860m). The effects of the altitude on the ambient temperature were immediately felt (-5°C at 6 p.m.) before considering wind chill.

A good supper was enjoyed (500g of pasta for some!) and the next day's itinerary was discussed. The Wednesday dawned clear and very cold with an icy, piercing wind blowing. The party was split in two, with a group of 7 heading back to the Bell traverse to climb the Mitre, (3023m), another major free standing peak in the Drakensberg with a 'D' - graded route. The remaining party decided to take a relaxing yet spectacular walk along the escarpment. An enthusiastic and buoyant vibe percolated through the campsite that night (as did the cold, down to -9°C without considering the wind chill) and conundrums and riddles of various kinds taxed the brain until late in the night.

The next few days were set aside for walking along the escarpment and the Thursday (happy birthday Roger) saw the party wandering south past the Mlambonje buttress and summiting on the Elephant (3109m). The Elephant is exactly that, with an inconspicuous gentle SW slope and a vertical drop off of nearly 600m on its NE side. A small recess in that impenetrable wall of sheer basalt was discovered by Peter 'Navy Seal' Hartley and provided a fitting (if rather lofty) lunch spot. After an adventurous (abseiling and ice-wedge surfing) afternoon, camp was pitched on the western slopes of Cleft Peak and the birthday jelly was served complete with birthday candles.

An early start was required on the Friday such that Cleft Peak could be summited and after a long just-over-the-next-rise-never-ending-hill, the summit was reached. At 3281m this was the highest point of our hike.

The sky had been filled with weird and inexplicable cloud effects for the first few days, and the Friday morning was no exception with impressive formations of high wispy cirrus clouds temporarily stealing the limelight in the dynamic portrait of the sky. Something big was going to happen sometime soon!!!!

After descending Cleft Peak (and the return of the missing Roger Diamond), we began descending the Organ Pipes Pass and then began our descent of the Camel route (literally and figuratively). We followed the countour path to the campsite (1980m) in the Tseketske River valley. Washing and bathing (starkers) in the Tseketske River was followed by a communal last supper. The sleeping disease (having already infected Warwick) became contagious at around 10pm and soon dreamland became a rather overcrowded place.

The following day saw bubbling cauldrons of cumulus clouds rapidly approaching the campsite. Within an hour after leaving camp it began

snowing. The Lower Berg and Lower Berg escarpment were transformed into a winter wonderland and snowball fights (on both sides of a rather putrid-looking snowman) increased in frequency. All good things come to an end at some stage, and the pleasant meander through the snow gave way to the tar-surfaced hotel road and ultimately the campsite. The sky cleared that afternoon and the now unveiled snow-smothered Cathedral Range looked on as game of Ultimate Frisbee was played on the soccer field behind the campsite. A pleasant drop of real Russian Vodka (Ussurisski Balzam) provided a good warm-up for the evening's festivities at Harry's Bar (Cathedral Peak Hotel).

An early rise on the Sunday was followed by a dangerous (watch that bridge, Jeff) drive (in very low visibility, moderate to heavy snowing) to Bergville. A more relaxing drive (in fact an anticlimax) couriered the weary, yet satisfied hikers back to the greatest mountain in the world ...

An E-Mail Message

To: DRAKENSBERGIES

From: ROGER DIAMOND

To start off with, here is a rip of Pierre's route description last week at our Thursday meeting: "My trip will be further North than Roger's, although it will overlap, but it will also overlap with Axel's, which is further South than mine, as well as further South than Roger's; mine isn't really that far North, it's just further North than the others', although we might go further South than Roger, but we will certainly be further North than anyone! But all the trips will be awesomely awesome!"

T RANSKEI HIKE :

PORT ST JOHNS TO COFFEE BAY

Date: (JULY VAC 1996)

Leader: Ernest Fratzak

Group: Colin Davidson, Caryn Maxwell, Dunbar, Tim, Graham, Richard, Kim, Nicola, Bridget, Elijane, Ernest

Written By: Caryn Maxwell

It was early, waaay early on a Sunday morning when the lucky bunch who managed to get onto the most popular hike, left Cape Town for the annual awesome Transkei Hike. This year the Oh-so-relaxed Ernest volunteered to lead an allsorts group of 12 shell-seekers. There was Casanova Colin Davidson (say no more), daring Dunbar (who raced into the sea faster than you could say SHARK!), talkative Tim (who continued talking in his sleep), Games galore Graham, Racing Richard (first up the mountain leading the way) - BUT NO CAMELMAN!! Cautious Kim (until she got the hang of Spoons, that is), Not-shy Nicola (wowed tha guys - read further for details!), Beautiful Bridget (had the guys drowning in her eyes!), Easy-going Elijane (take a slow stroll on the wild side) and, so I've been told, "Camel-woman" Caryn (by those who shirk responsibility).

Sunday night was spent at the Buccaneers Inn, just outside of East London. Monday was spent experiencing the chaos of Umtata and the calm of Silaki Nature Reserve in Port St Johns.

Our days began at around 7 am (make that 9 am for Graham and Tim alias G and T). A swim in the sea for some brave (read suckers for punishment) souls and we had left the huts by 10 am. On two occasions Ernest decided to defy the locals and the map and to sounds of: "No path! Dangerous! No, this way!", we marched along paths that led to nowhere. We had to do a vertical bundu-bashing ascent up a couple of mountain faces, come cliffs. Who needs skin on their legs anyway?! Nothing like that burning sensation when our thorn-ravaged bodies met with the salty sea. Nevertheless, our misguided leader (referred to as the headless chicken by one individual -



"We were possibly the only group who weren't frozen to death these holidays." Cred: Ernest Fratzak

identity confidential to protect the innocent!) managed to get us onto the correct path and we could appreciate the truly spectacular views and the wonderful sunshine. We were possibly the only group who weren't frozen to death these holidays. Yipee!

By lunchtime we had usually covered the majority of the distance and could afford to catch some waves and laze on the beach while surveying and being surveyed by some cows and local children. The evenings were spent searching for sea shells and laughing uproarously at G and T and Ernest who know just about every joke ever told and some that should be kept to themselves!!!

On the first night, "Spoons" enlightened us on certain fundamental characteristics of our fellow companions. Some traits were possessiveness, greediness, speediness (or lack thereof: Kim!) and killer instincts (all of the participants), who the control freak was (Graham, who insisted on being in charge) and also the cheats (the skilled and very skilled). It was nice to know on the first night that they'd kill you for a spoon. After witnessing the damage caused by blunt objects I shudder to think of this group in possession of sharp utensils!! The cards were given a good workout, providing probably the only stress on the entire hike when Ernest and T fumbled around to cries of "Hesitation!" The pressure was enormous!

On the third night, much bonking took place between Elijane, G and T but Elijane was most unimpressed - Shillingtons, you'll just have to work on your technique! Bridget disappointed many by not showing any signs of POG on the last morning. Caryn experienced what it's like to be in a boy's locker room (SCARY!) and Nicola wowed the guys by crossing the raging(?) river topless (that sight is definitely imprinted on their brains!). I must admit that the lack of Camelmen on this trip was disappointing - a little bit of mud and bramble bush brought out the most amazing capacity to moan and whine. Where's your sense of adventure, guys? Of course they will deny any responsibility, hence anything that they should say with regard to "Camel-woman" should be received with skepticism and disregarded.

Thank you Ernest, Dunbar and Colin for your lilo's. The rivers would definitely have put a damper on the trip if we hadn't have had your rare flashes of brilliance.

Lastly, it was absolutely awesome. The weather couldn't have been better, the people were just the best and loads of fun and Ernest, you got us all back in one piece (miracles do happen!). Thanks! I know we'll always remember it and I'm sure that somehow, sometime we'll all be back.....

THE HUT BEHIND THE FLAT MOUNTAIN

Date: 25/26 May 1996

Leader: Jeremy Wakeford

Group: Roger Diamond, David Acott, Kim C-Brown, Andrew Groves, Donovan Crickmore, Steven Bretherick, Alistair McMaster, Tilman Stasch, Jeremy Wakeford.

Written By: Jeremy Wakeford

It was a bright and calm morning. Somewhere, in the distance, a dog yawned. The group assembled at the usual place on campus at the godly hour of 10 o'clock (having given hangovers a chance to sneak back into the cupboards until next time). The hat dropped, and we were off, beetling over the Cape Flats to meet at the MCSA's Du Toit's Kloof Hut (the beginning of the weekend's saunter).

Apparently, Roger and Tilman weren't aware it was a race, and kept the rest of us waiting for ages.

The last stretch of the road had been torn asunder by the omnipresent roadworkers; fortunately, a snap of the fingers brought them scurrying over in their monster-like machines to set things straight. Now that the most difficult obstacle of the trip had been surmounted, we got down to the serious business of mellowing out.

The walk is casual, to say the least. After a short section of path through lush fynbos (not a contradiction in terms, actually), we turned onto a gravel road, which meandered over hills and dales and farmlands (Roger declined to buy trout this time). We had received strict instructions that there should be no "loitering" on private property, so we didn't dally long for a snack break. David "when's the next epic hike?" Acott's legs had turned to jelly after the previous day's workout, so the leader was able to take it easy. We stopped on the last rise and cast our gaze across the valley towards the Agtertafelberg hut, which beckoned in the afternoon sun. Tilman borrowed Jeremy's camouflaged binoculars for a closer look, and announced that there was a jeep next to the hut, with men in army uniforms milling around. Roger's expression of shock and outrage dissolved into a broad grin and Tilman got a jab in the ribs for his trouble. We arrived shortly afterwards, extremely grateful to have the place to ourselves.

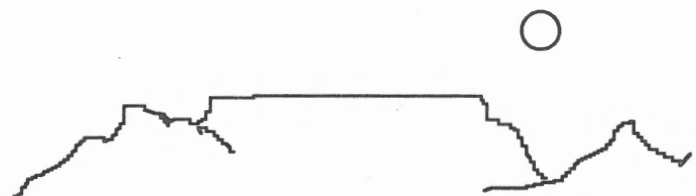
There was no time to lose - the sun was sinking faster than a fresher at a Zimsoc party and (as they said on the day of Pearl Harbour) there was a nip in the air. We hurried on down to the pools in the Elandspadrivierkloof (if you think that's bad, try "buffelmeteenkoelmorsdoodgeskietfontein"). Having grown up in Fish Hoek, I consider the Atlantic ocean to be ridiculously cold. However, after swimming the length of the two adjoining pools (about 20 metres in total), I changed my mind.

Bodily extremities shrieked with pain and tried desperately to be absorbed by the torso. I could swear my toes were going to drop off.

Next on the agenda was supper ("nosh" for some, "cuisine" for others). David and Alistair figured the best way to while away the evening hours was to cook elaborately. At least they didn't burn the hut down with their flame-thrower stoves.

The chores done, we squeezed ourselves around one of the tables, armed with bottles of Amarula, port and Jerepigo, and a double pack of cards. After a few minutes of bargaining, we settled on a game: "uno" to some, "crazy eights" to others. Funny, I counted nine crazies. For some reason, no-one was particularly good at this game; maybe chocolate wasn't sufficient incentive, maybe it was the booze. But it didn't subdue the mirth every time Tilman got to pick up fifteen cards. Eventually, the bottles were dry and the chocolate had vanished. With sides sore from laughing, we slid into sleeping bags, each person contemplating the beauty of the surroundings and how best to suffocate the snorer nearby.

The next morning was oh-so-relaxed (except for those who hadn't cleaned their pots the night before). At about noon, we ambled back to the cars, soaking up the glorious winter sun. At nine o'clock that night, Dave called me to say he'd finally found the rock we stashed in his pack. What goes around, comes around! (Read: "Cedarberg Hike") (ed.)



WHO NEEDS THE ALPS ?

If, on one of the few sunny days this winter, you happened to look up from Jammie Stairs to the mountains, you would have been overwhelmed by the beautiful snow capped peaks. The most prominent among them is Waaihoek.

Now, imagine it the other way around. You are sitting in the sun, with your ski's pointing down a slope on which your tracks are soon to become the first through the fine layer of powder snow. You lift your eyes to the horizon and see a very familiar mountain feature. No it is not Mont Blanc, but it is the one and only Table Mountain not more than 100km away. After one final look you push off and head down towards the hut, where a warm glass of Francois' Gluwein is waiting for you. Soon the only sound you hear is the wind in your ears and the gentle sound of your ski's gliding over the snow. After a few graceful turns and a jump, you come to a halt, take your ski's off and walk back to the top for another exhilarating run.

This was the kind of feeling I thought you could only get by paying thousands of Rands to go to Europe or America. But on the weekend of Women's Day, a number of MSC members and I found that this same feeling could be experienced on our very own doorstep.

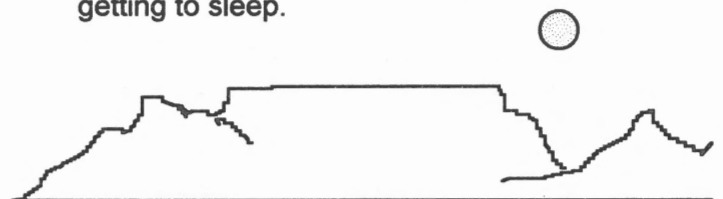
As we walked up on Friday we could see the cold front coming over the mountains behind us. We finally reached Point High with a toboggan that we had mysteriously discovered at Middle Hut. We still do not know what happened to the tobogganist.

Half way through Rocky Band we came across our first patch of snow. Graham, Ernest and Michael were all smiles as they tried to climb onto our toboggan and pose for the cameras. Little did we know what was over the ridge. Passing Point High, we were greeted by an unbelievable winter wonderland. We rushed down to the remains of Pells, put on gloves and beanies, found a pair of old ski's and hit the snowy slopes behind Pells. For more than half an hour we played like little kids in the snow. We arrived at Hoare Hut tired, just before the rain. Perfect timing. As we settled into our sleeping bags and made tea, more groups of wet and cold hikers stumbled in. When the last group arrived, the rain was changing to snow and all thirty of us settled in for a cold night.

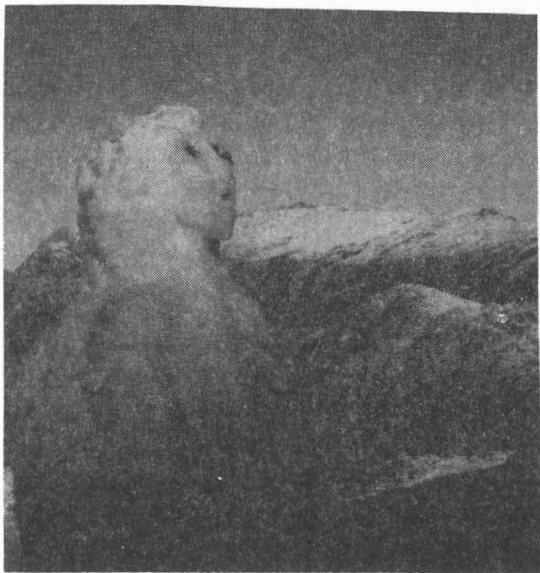
The next morning we awoke to cloudy skies but fresh snow. Even before breakfast we were frantically looking for suitable boots and skis. We spent the remainder of the day getting to grips with the slope, the ice and the rocks. While most people stayed on the relatively safe slopes in front of the hut, the more adventurous headed for the peak where the snow was more suitable for skiing.

It was an exhausting day because we had to slog back to the top after every run. Re-energised after a short break spent huddled behind a rock munching peanuts and chocolate, we were able to carry on until it was so dark that the only way that we could see another skier was from the sparks he made every time he hit a rock.

Although there were still 30 people in the hut that night, I had no difficulty getting to sleep.



If we had thought that Saturday was good then Sunday was unbelievably good. The sun was out and a fresh layer of snow had been laid that night, covering most of the ice patches. Once again we headed for the peak where in full view of Table Mountain, we all improved our skiing under the knowledgeable eye of Francois. He later showed us how it was supposed to be done by skiing down a seemingly impossible gully behind the hut. These Swiss are crazy - but good! While Francois was defying the laws of physics, Ernest was succumbing to them. On the way down from the peak, the speed got too much for him and he ended up in a heap in the soft snow at the foot of a small water-fall. Later he found that he had suffered a most common skiing injury - a broken wrist. The fact that this was the only injury was quite amazing



Very large and lifelike snowman with the...Alps? in the background. Cred: James Cullis

considering the weather conditions for many on the walk in, and the number of novice skiers on the slopes.

Despite huge temptation, we all had to return to the realities of life. It was time to leave our last tracks in the snow, pack away the ski's and begin the trudge home. But before we left, the surf got up and it was time for Alistair and myself to pull out his



Our Antics were accompanied by Ernest on the single-stringed guitar playing the "Snowman Bottleneck Blues". Cred: Roger Diamond

windsurfer board and have a go. No matter how much we tried, we could not get the board to follow the desired direction and so we kept landing in the river. Our antics were accompanied by Ernest on the single steel stringed guitar playing the "Snowman Bottleneck Blues".

Looking back from Point High I reflected on the last few days. I can say, without a doubt, that for all of us at the hut, it was the most memorable weekend of the year. I can't wait to get back up there.

SKI HEIL!!!

JAMES CULLIS

NURSERY BUTTRESS TO THE BACK TABLE

AN EXCITING VARIATION TO THE USUAL ROUTES

Date: Sunday 4 August 1996

Leader: Warwick S Board

Group: Paul Leroy, Roger Diamond, Phil Ginsberg, Carol Matthews, Nicoletta Bertoldi, Janine Wichmann, Torben Wiborg, Ewen Findlay, Michael Schnobel, Dominik Rudmann, Alastair Sellick, Sonja van Essen, Jeff McQuaid, Richard Allen.

Written By: Warwick S. Board

There was a fairly good response to the rather colourful notice (that was subsequently littered with several interesting psychological opinions) on the MSC notice board.

We drove to the Cecelia forest car park and then proceeded to the contour path. A pleasant walk of about 20 minutes saw us reach the base of the watercourse that forms the start of the Nursery Buttress route where the first of the "are you crazy?" comments was heard.

Ascending this water trickle, we were led to a traverse to the left and the first of the rock pitches. Six 'B' grade pitches were successfully ascended (with the "you must be mad" comments now increasing in frequency). Each member of the party can feel proud of their climbing skills.

The slope angle eased off considerably once the crest of the lower buttress was reached. The view was truly spectacular as it was one of those crystal clear sunny winter's days that only the Cape can have. The recent rains had washed the mountain side and the Orangebreasted Sunbirds, Grassbirds and Neddickies frolicked amongst the lush green fynbos.

The middle sections of the buttress involved a moderately (trust me) steep climb through a small jungle of fynbos before the steeper top portions of the buttress were reached. The upper buttress (also known as Castle Rocks) is the well known (and much photographed) sentinel that guards over the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, and a line following a series of near vertical fractures was followed to the summit (769m) - the lunch stop where several large boulders provided ample shade. The terrain underfoot became easier and the Woodhead and Hely-Hutchinson reservoirs (both full) were reached via Ash Valley. After a brief stroll along the Woodhead Reservoir Dam wall, we waltzed down the concrete road past the Victoria and Alexandria reservoirs (also full) to the Wynberg Overseer's hut. The water in the communal tap at the hut was not nearly as tasty as the refreshing mountain stream water that was of very recent vintage. The concrete road (the Bridle path) snaked past the De Villiers Reservoir (also full) and a panoramic view stretching from the Hottentots Holland mountains in the east, over False Bay, the Peninsula mountain chain and finally the Karbonkelberg, Little Lion's Head and Grootkop (in the west) was enjoyed.

We descended (rather rapidly) via the Cecelia Ravine route and reached the Cecelia Forest car park at 14.45, where our cars were waiting patiently for us. The extra special ingredients that made this such an enjoyable hike were: a sprinkling of rock scrambling, the participants and the stunning weather.

THE CUTTING EDGE OF WITELS

Date: January 1996

Leader: Ray Greenwood

Group: James Cullis, Marc Middelmann, Ralph Walker, Stephen Miller, Robert Best, Berdine van der Linde.

Written By: Marc Middelmann

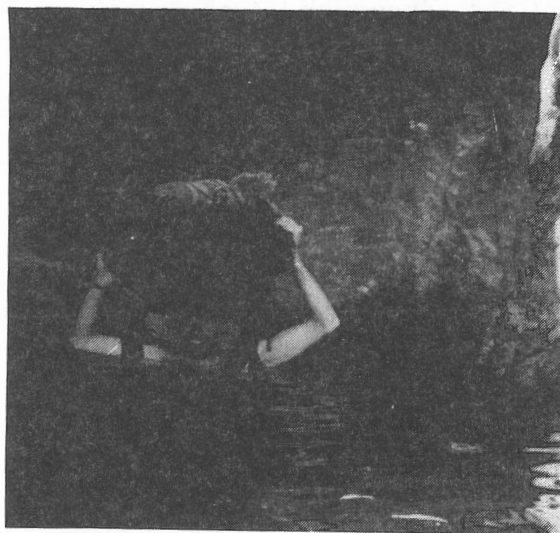
They escaped from jail, they climbed down from trees and they crawled out of pubs, seven ragged and grisly hikers, with one common purpose: to stretch all spiritual and physical boundaries and experience the Witels. Well, the Witels almost experienced us, labeling our trip as a truly epic adventure and a definite must on any hikers agenda.

The mastermind behind our operation, Ray Greenwood, displayed a particular liking to stellar navigation and led us up to Pell's Hut at night, where a satisfying meal and a welcome bed restored chemical balance and cardiac activity.

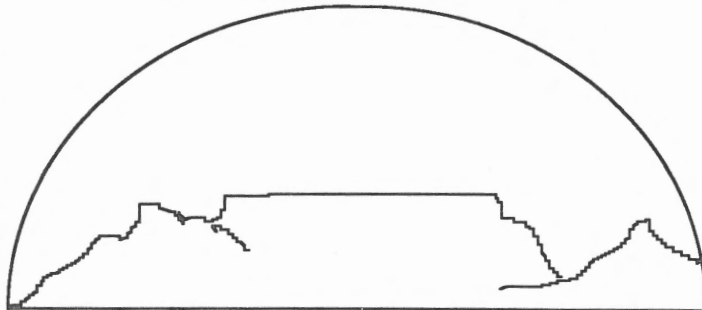
We evacuated Pell's Hut the following morning and headed down into the Witels. The scenery within the valley is awe-inspiring, especially the cascading waterfalls where nature has provided spectacular architecture.

Some farmer must have been cloud seeding because day three dawned rather wet. With no shelter, wet belongings and facing a series of compulsory swims I honestly thought it wouldn't be long before my parking meter was empty. I was shivering uncontrollably and thought it best to weather the storm in what shelter we could find, rather than tackle the swims. But before you could say conspiracy, our leader decided to push on.

Somehow by late afternoon seven cold and wet bodies had made it to Shelter Camp and many cups of hot chocolate and sherry punctuated the ensuing survival stores. Thanks and major Brownie points go to our leader for making the right decision. The weather steadily improved as we boulder-hopped our way to Junction Pool, ending a thoroughly worthwhile and epic hike. Thanks to the gang for a lot of fun. And remember: apples get worms, soap queens go through menopause, time flies by. Don't miss a chance to be at the cutting edge of life's experience - the Witels!



Pierre demonstrates the skill required for transporting a backpack in that cold Witels Water.
Cred: Jenny Greenwood



T ABLE MOUNTAIN THREE PEAK CHALLENGE

1995

Date: 7 October 1995

Leaders: Andrew Lewis, Roger Diamond, Carel Haumann.

Group: Craig Gebhardt, Carl Marais, Dunbar Lewis, Ewen Findlag, Michael Riemer, Murray Heyns, Ryan Schneeberger, Corne van Dyk, Thileepan Kailasanathan, Alan Shapiro, Paul Leroy.

Written By: Carel Haumann

The discerning reader will have noticed a distinct sexual bias in the constituent of the abovementioned group.

I must say that we, as a team were deeply saddened by this most unfortunate twist of fate; I am sure the summits of Devil's Peak, Table Mountain and Lion's Head mourned equally much.

Despite this major setback, we set off in dubious weather from the UCT Sports Centre at 8.30 am, heading for Mowbray Ridge on Devil's Peak. Two hours later we reached the summit. The weather had improved considerably. Down to the Saddle and onto Ledges. Soon we reached the spectacular platform below the "C" crack which gives access to the summit plateau of Table Mountain. Having previously courted death on this pitch myself, I was very worried that someone would take a fall - something which, in the distant past, I had not found too difficult to do. All too soon Andrew Lewis fired up the crack. The others followed smoothly, leaving me with a big pack and dry mouth. As I climbed up and discovered that the jug-hold which I had directed others towards, did not exist, I longed more

and more for a big, fat, shiny bolt to clip. References from above about 'sport climbers' rubbed salt into a most tender ego-wound. Eventually Maclear's Beacon appeared from the vertical desert across to the Upper Cable Station and down India-Venster.

At Kloof Nek I hinted we need not torture ourselves and go up Lion's Head as well. But, the boys were adamant - they were going to bag the 3 summits no matter what. Finally, after a total vertical gain (i.e. from the Sports Centre) of 1700 metres and 9 ½ hours worth of walking, we were on the third and last summit. I wish to congratulate all participants; furthermore I implore female UCT MSC to accept this noble challenge of the three peaks.

T HREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

1996

Date: Sunday 1 September

Leader: Warwick Board

Group: Warwick Board, Francois, Roger Diamond, James Lockley, Richard Milne

Written By: Roger Diamond

A Board flies into my room, smacks me in the face and we're Woolsacking up the Drive. People, boots, faces, legs, shorts and packs. Do the car shuffle and wait with trepidation. Eastern Buttress - never done it before, no-one except our leader.

Eastern Buttress 'B' on Devil's Peak is a bit like this: you start off from the contour path, for a few metres in the stream which flows down from 2nd Waterfall Ravine and Subsidiary Gully and almost immediately exit onto the right hand bank by doing a vertical grass manoeuvre.

And so the mood is set for the rest of the route; interesting, intricate and incredible. Interesting how we call this fun - bush whacking against never-ending prickly fynbos. Intricate how you dodge the prickles and delicately clasp untested rock. Incredible how rugged and dramatic these mountains in the middle of the city are. Up out of the indigenous forest, through the worst bush, sun baking, humidity steaming and then onto as much rock as possible. Lenticular clouds invade the sky, giving depth to the atmosphere, but down here on the ground it is just still and warm. The mountain, the weather and our group are an entity. Keeping a steady pace, we reach the section where we enter and ascend subsidiary gully for a small portion. Eyes widen and blood circulates a bit faster as the exposure becomes serious. Into the trickling gully and climbing boots become slippers and hands grasp for the next mossy move. The physiological challenge of the 3 peaks is easily overcome by the psychological motivation at this stage.

On the final sections of the Eastern Buttress, we scramble around at will and Francois Vuille happens to be at the back for a moment. What a moment. A loose boulder, carefully avoided by most, is pulled out of equilibrium by Francois, who very neatly dodges his own creation, which then flies off the edge of a cliff. We all feel it hit the ground about 100m below and then see it roll, bounce, smack a rock and shatter into the air like a firework. The pieces cascade down and hurtle through a bushy slope, making some Himalayan Tnars eject themselves from their green hideaway.

All alive, the 1000m height of Devil's Peak was reached. Now upon summiting, a certain oblong block came into view. Just a conventional, run-of-the-mill, Table Mountain Group sandstone boulder, to some of us. To our leader, this oblong block was Ledges.

Some of the party wanted to see where the Ledges route went and this was where the oblong block became a reference point, an aesthetic feature, the crux take off, in fact, a veritable psychological security block. So we screamed down to the saddle, knuckled down across the knife edge, climbed the now obvious *<|#~!/ oblong block, and scooted up Ledges. Lunch at the top, past Maclear's Beacon (1086m) and to the top of Platteklip Gorge. Onwards to Fountain Ledge, where climbs of grand splendor brood over the ocean view. Down India Venster and to the base of Kloof Corner on the contour path. Physical fatigue was now with us all. It had been a long day - a full day on the mountain, well, 2 mountains that is!

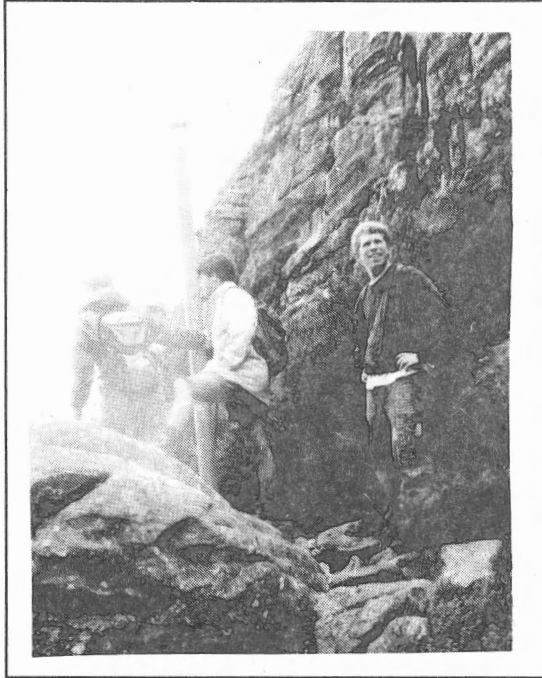
Our sky had been a shield of altostratus with the mean marine glare remaining out to sea. Down now, we got hot as the sun came out and so did David Acott's chest. Traffic, noise, hunger, fatigue and Lion's Head was no longer such an appealing option. Career down to Kloof Nek and stroll to the base of Lion's Head, after having made sure that the closed Cableway sign now read open. Really, one can't let the tourists down that quickly.

Impending mutiny: sure, we could all make Lion's Head but we've all done it before and the cloud had pulled in to enshroud Table Mountain and Lion's Head. The physiological challenge of the 3 peaks was no longer being overcome by psychological motivation! Hey, hold it, this is the Mountain & Ski Club - no fading! So all 14 of us tootled up the little peak, even James Lockley, initiator of the attempted mutiny. Admittedly it was cold and cloudy on top, but as the clouds cleared and the champagne took effect, joy and relief washed over us. Zest and curiosity returned: Richard Milne asked "Where is Sea Point?" "Have another swig Richard!"

For those who stayed on, it was probably the finest day any of us have ever spent on Table Mountain.

The cloud west of the summit had cleared and in the remaining cloud that caressed the summit from the east, appeared a fogbow - your shadow cast onto and into the cloud and surrounded by concentric rainbows - which lasted until the sun set.

Surely a remarkable experience.



The sign reads: "This is not an easy way down". Cred: Dominik Rudmann

ABLE MOUNTAIN THIKE

Date: 24 March 1996

Leader: James Cullis

Group: James Cullis, Cheryl MacKay, Jenny Greenwood, Steve Miller, Caroline Colman, Lianne

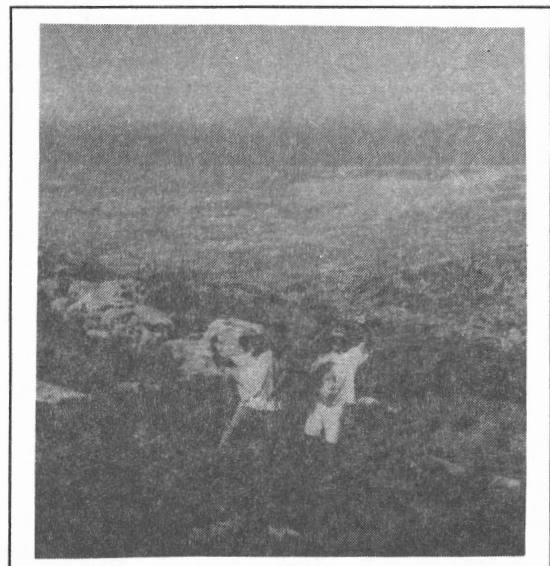
Written By: Cheryl Mackay

On Sunday 24 March, a group of seven set out for Table Mountain. The weather in Rondebosch was cold and cloudy and most people were wrapped up warmly for the day's hike. Once we reached the mountain, however, it was crystal clear and very warm.

This made for an excellent day's hiking but was definitely not easy on the people who'd forgotten to bring shorts!

Initially, we climbed at a brisk pace up the steep Indian Venster route with James practically running ahead of us. We soon caught up to other groups of hikers and after chatting and resting, our pace dropped considerably. During one of our rests, James was quick to show his great love for rocks. He stuck his head under and through all sort of places it didn't belong. The surrounding photographers (namely Jenny, Lianne and Caroline) snapped happily away.

We were way-laid along the way for a snatch of rock climbing and the terminating of a few infamous pine trees. Including the stops, it took 3 hours to reach Maclear's Beacon, the highest point on TM. The climb was quite tough in parts, but we were rewarded on the way down: we were blessed with animal impersonations from Jenny, James and Steve. What more can one ask to top off a beautiful day's hiking?



James and Steve terminate a few infamous pine trees. Cred: Jenny Greenwood

B LOUPUNT TRAIL WEEKEND

Date: 27-29 September

Leader: James

Group: Kylie Hatton, Janet Erskine,
James, Mike

Written By: Kylie Hatton and
Janet Erskine

Our weekend away in the mountains just above Montagu, was at first threatened by limited numbers of hikers, but as we departed from Montagu on the Sunday afternoon, our small number of four was one of the major reasons for the weekend's success. Friday afternoon saw four people who knew little of each other leave for Montagu. We arrived in the late afternoon at a beautiful hut site, which was to be our base camp for our summit attempt of Bloupunt.

Saturday morning was heralded rather loudly by another group of hikers outside our hut - very effective alarm clocks. The ascent up to Bloupunt was filled with numerous wild flowers, insects and awe-inspiring crags. On the top of Bloupunt, we were surrounded by beautiful views of local towns and we indulged in marmite and provitas for lunch. Chocolate was supplied by our leader, James, for pudding.

Three welcoming waterfalls ended our descent home, where at the second waterfall, we all enjoyed a very chilly swim and gorgeous scenery.

Saturday evening was a perfect ending to a wonderful day, with another cup of tea, supplied by Janet and Kylie. Sunday morning saw Mike and James, the fitter hikers, complete the Kogman's Trail. While Janet and Kylie walked along the Badkloof trail to the Montagu Hot Spring.

Janet and Kylie, on returning to the hut, were greeted by two rather interesting additions to the baboon population of Bloupunt. (Thanks to Mike and James!)

The weekend away in Montagu was spectacular. Thank you to our leader, James, who let us take things at our own pace. We will master three Provitas in a minute James - watch us!

L IONS HEAD SUNDOWNERS AND MOONUPPERS

Date: Tuesday 5th March 1995

Leader: Tessa Dicey

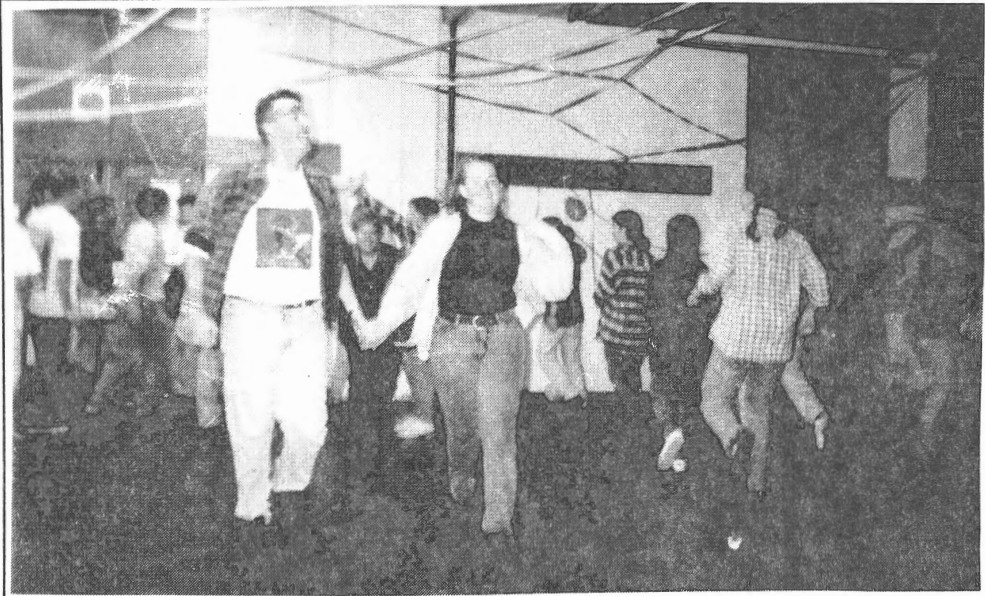
Group: Many, many people!

Written By: Tessa Dicey

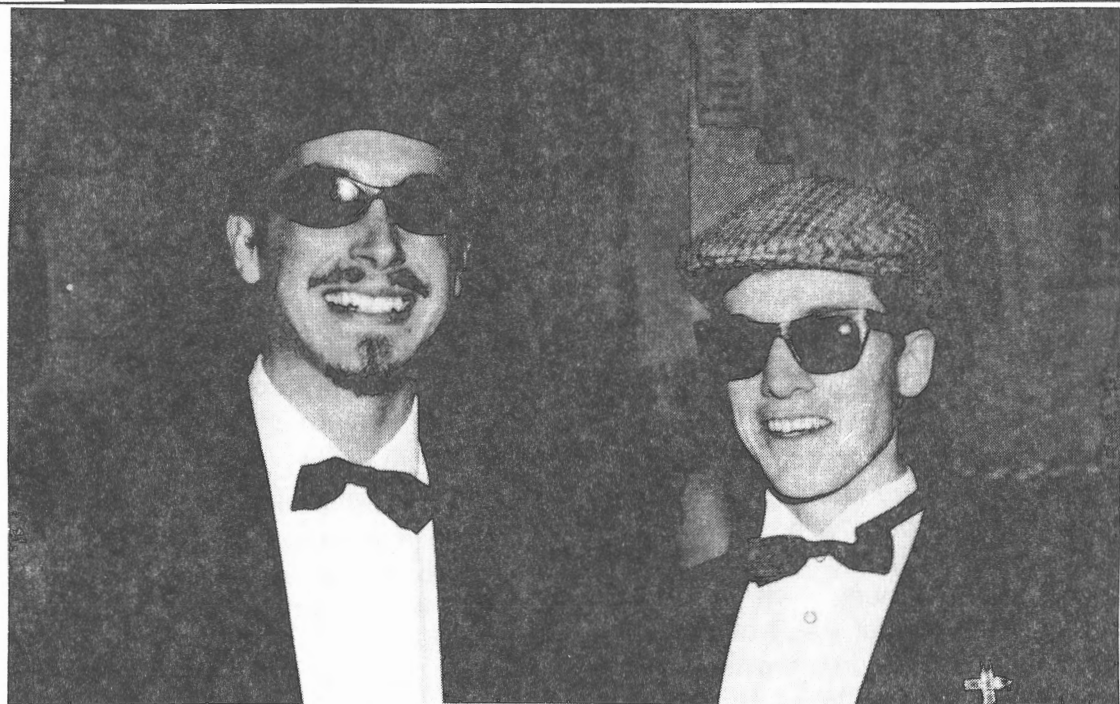
Sundowners are very popular with our Club - and the rest of Cape Town, judging by the numbers we encountered on the top of Lion's Head. Weather-wise, we could hardly have wished for a more pleasant evening, not a cloud in the sky.

We set off from the information centre with quite a crowd, to be met by an even larger crowd of fellow M and S Clubbers at the bottom. After much huffing and puffing (by the unfit), we joined in the queue to go up the chains. Then it was on up to the top. A bit more queuing to actually find a place to sit with the rest of the population. Our patience was well rewarded with a beautiful sunset and an even more spectacular moon rise. Picnics and drinks were handed out to resuscitate the body and comfort the soul before the descent by the light of the moon.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the walk, including the many foreign students that had joined us. What better way to show off this beautiful city of ours?



The 1996 Barn Dance -Heel 'n toe and Doh si doh. *Cred: Ernest Fratzak*



Alastair and Jeremy looking cool *Cred: Adrienne*



Dracula and his ...wife !?! *Cred: Adrienne*

*A Rough Guide to***T**HE SOCIAL SCENE

Armchair Travel and the Art of Zen Buddhism



In the year just gone by, I cruised through the wanders of our blue-green planet armchair style, drinking and laughing with the locals, albeit a familiar bunch each time. As this has been a very cheap and enlightening experience, I decided to share my wisdom. Just follow this simple routine on a regular basis (Wednesday nights to be precise). At around the same time every week (8pm is a good hour), in the same sacred place (North Council Room, a cool chill-out spot). You're doing good! Now take a deep breath, fold your legs, have a beer and you're ready to go places... Africa, Asia, North and South America, Australia, Europe - you name it, we're there! Climbing, skiing, hiking or just bumming around, many of the voyagers either are or were members of the UCT MSC. Thanks to them for coming back to share their experiences and showing us the world.

The Cheese 'n Wine

This beginning-of-term ice-breaker, was as always a good way to start the year. The freshers, after a bewildering week at Varsity got to see the bright side of being a student - you can party on a Wednesday night. It was good to see the club's veterans too, imparting their immense insight into life's more perplexing issues, like how to catch more than one raisin in your mouth without spilling that 'vintage' red on your new Crispi's...

The Barn Dance

Heel 'n toe, doh si doh, grab a partner and away you go! If you can't get the swing of this good ol' fashioned hop, you've got two left feet and you're a redneck! Caroline and the Cowboys on guitar and fiddle, played bluegrass tunes and a merry lot of guys and gals provided the entertainment, as they cavorted around Molly Blackburn Hall in cowboy boots, with coloured bandannas on their heads (these were actually streamers and they left nice, bright coloured marks on everyone's foreheads, including mine☺).

The Cult Classic Cocktail Party

As the sun set over Zandvlei and the North-Wester howled the last of the ducks and wind-surfers out of the water, the clouds were whisked in and with them came the creatures of the night... Frankfurter, Dracula, Mr Pink, Maid Marianne, Tintin, Don Juan and various others. They devoured the haute cuisine and quaffed down the cocktails like there was no tomorrow. Boogying, jiving, twistin' and head-banging, the orgy got going with a free striptease by a 'sweet transvestite...' This sent some staggering for more booze, only to be confronted by another high-heeled fella flaunting it on top of the bar. After that things got a bit blurred... If it wasn't for the lurid leftovers and the photo's, I'd think it was a zany hallucination conjured up by a delirious insomniac on LSD. I hope we do it again next year!

ERNEST FRATCZAK



THE STORMING OF BABOON PEAK

A FIRST ASCENT FOR THE CLUB

Date: 4 August 1996

Leader: Morgan Behr

Group: Morgan Behr, Pierre Hoffa, Carel Haumann, Alan Shapiro, Emma Sealy, Matthew Overett, Kathy Pollack, Alok Limbacia, Leigh Meinert

Written By: Pierre Hoffa

Baboon Peak: one of the few mountains in the Hex River range that remained unclimbed by club members, until it was bagged on August 4 1996. This unfamiliar peak, boasting an altitude of 1616 metres is situated in the remote and rugged Dome Kloof. Although almost all of its neighbours are higher, with many being quite well known to regular mountaineers in the Hex, Baboon Peak poses a good challenge with magnificent views from the summit.

The easiest, in fact the only reasonable approach to the mountain is to walk in along the Buffelshoek Kloof which starts on a farm approximately 20 km North-East of Worcester. It is an easy 3 hour walk along a jeep track to the base of a well - defined ridge, which leads up Baboon Peak dividing the rugged Dome and Buffelshoek Kloofs. This area contains many Bushmen paintings to which we were directed by a friendly farmer. Since we had time to explore we ambled off and spent the better part of the day trying to get to the rock art. Throughout our travels we caught distant glimpses of the snow - capped Baboon peak. After crossing a number of icy and strongly flowing rivers, we made it to an ideal campsite

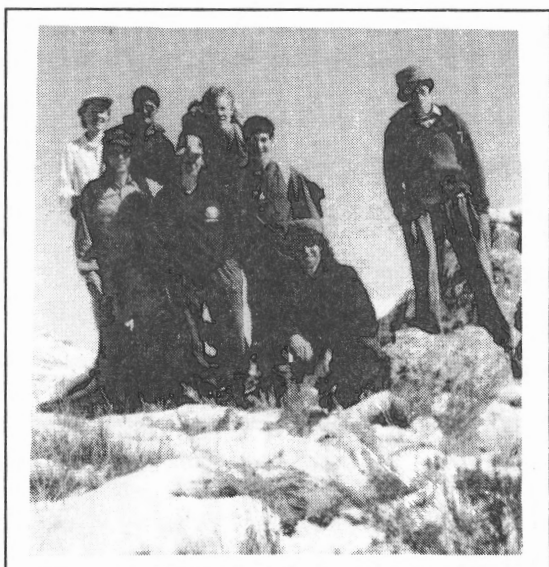
beneath the ridge just as it was getting dark. Since we planned to start the next morning before sunrise, Morgan, Matthew and myself did a short recce to find a route up onto the ridge.

By 6:30 am the following morning we were well on our way. Climbing onto the ridge up a loose scree slope with thick bush and crossing a river by torchlight provided a 'Camel adventure' atmosphere. The ridge is quite simple to follow and is beaconed in places. All of 1100 metres had to be climbed over rough and steep terrain. The entire ridge seemed to be dominated by Buffelshoek Peak (at 2059m one of the highest peaks in the Western Cape and one of the boundary peaks of Zuurberg) and its twins (at 1899 & 1888m). Thanks to heavy snow falls of the previous week, all the surrounding peaks were blanketed in snow. We reached the summit in a comfortable 4 hours and were surrounded by an awesome view. The Peak names themselves could fire up ones imagination: Buffelshoek and its twins, The Shale Peaks, Buffels Dome (1721), Milner Peak (1995), Milner Needle (1885), 1st & 2nd Milner Ridge Peaks (1748 & 1887), Sentinel Peak (1939), Mount Brodie (1851), Horseshoe Peak (1881), Cleft Peak & Cleft Ridge Peak (1794 & 1865), Trident Peak, Crown Peak. Wow! It is so unusual to be on the summit of a high peak and still be looking upwards, in all directions at even higher peaks.

We sat down in the snow and ate Kendals Mint Cake. I quote off the wrapper "Romney's Kendal Mint Cake was carried to the summit of Baboon Peak [Mount Everest] by Morgan Behr and Pierre Hoffa [Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing] on the 4th August 1996 [29th May 1953]. "We sat on the snow and looked at the country far below us... nibbled Kendal Mint Cake". A member of the successful Baboon [Everest] Expedition wrote - "It was easily the most popular item on our high altitude ration - our only criticism was that we did not have enough of it". Sounds appropriate, doesn't it!

After Morgan had formally congratulated us on the historic moment - the first ascent of Baboon Peak by the UCT Mountain and Ski Club - and after all the summit photograph, we were ready for the long and rough descent of the ridge.

We reached the campsite by mid-afternoon, struck camp, lunched, then proceeded back to the cars along the jeep track. The hike back was of course not characterless - building the river crossing in the dark with the threat of a rain storm brewing above us. All in all, a great hike up a peak that I am sure will be visited by the club again in the not too distant future.



Summit Picture. (Lt→Rt) Kathy, Morgan, Alok, Emma, Matthew, Alan, Pierre, Carel.
Cred: Pierre Hoffa



COMPETITION CLIMBING



The sport of Competition Climbing has altered the nature of climbing from a pot-bellied-woolly-hatted mountaineering scene to one of fab-abs and in vogue sports wear. The competitors train for many hours every week either at the UCT or at the crag. This has increased the standards of all types of climbing in South Africa and with competitors campaigning

overseas will we one day see a World Champion from South Africa?

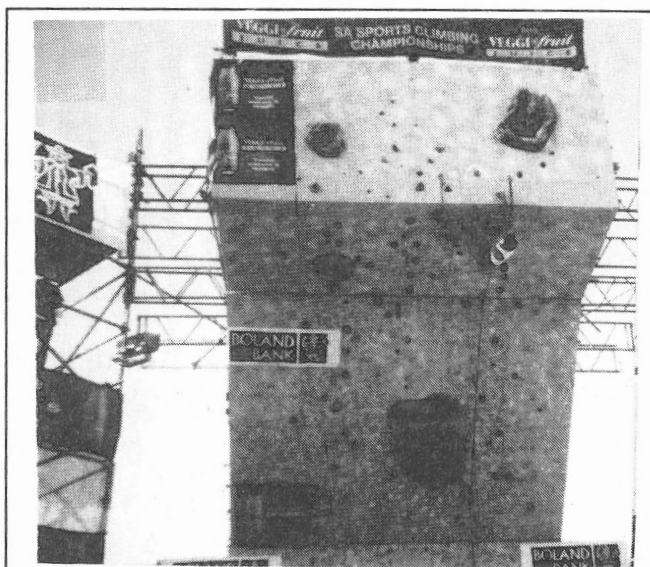
The Veggi Fruit Juice SA Sport Climbing Championships were held in three venues: V & A Waterfront in Cape Town, Ocean Action in Durban and Sandton Square in Johannesburg. The UCT MSC were well represented in the Cape Town leg by:

Men's Open

Women's Open

Rauri	Duff	placed	6 th
Robyn Freeman		placed	2 nd
Mike	Wood	placed	7 th
Alexandra Birch		placed	3 rd
Guy	Holwill	placed	8 th
Kirsty Donald		placed	4 th
Cheryl Jenkins		placed	6 th

The event in Durban was held on the same weekend as the Gunston 500 and attracted large crowds. The only entrants from the UCTMSC were Robyn Freeman who placed 4th, Mike Wood who placed 3rd and Keith Forbes 8th. The only member who took part in the Johannesburg competition was Mike Wood who placed 5th. Mike has qualified for the South African Team and was placed 4th in the National Rankings. He will be competing in the Birmingham World Cup in the U>K> in December and, depending on sponsorship, in the Graz two weeks later. An Up-and-Climbing Mountaineer.



Mike Wood at climbing champs. Cred: Maarten Turkstra

SuNg To ThE tUnE of I'm GoInG sLiGhTlY mAd by Queen, 1991

Dedicated to Warwick Board and with thanks to Andrew Lewis for getting me into
The Game.

When the cliff wall in front of you rises,
And the RD is not at all clear,
2004 orange overhangs,
Begin to loom over your head, oh dear.

Are the mountains telling you something,
You're missing gear, what you've got won't do,
You're simply not protected any more,
You might as well solo an iced up G2.

*I'm going slightly mad, I'm going slightly mad,
It finally happened, happened,
It finally happened, oh yeah,
It finally happened, I'm slightly mad.*

Oh dear.

I'm one nut short of a full rack,
I think I've gone the wrong way,
One pump short of the crux move,
I'm not my usual strong today.

I'm coming down from this killer,
I can't do it, can't you see,
My adrenaline is boiling over,
I feel like I'm climbing free.

*I'm going slightly mad, I'm going slightly mad,
It finally happened, happened,
It finally happened, ahuh,
It finally happened, I'm slightly mad.*

Oh dear.

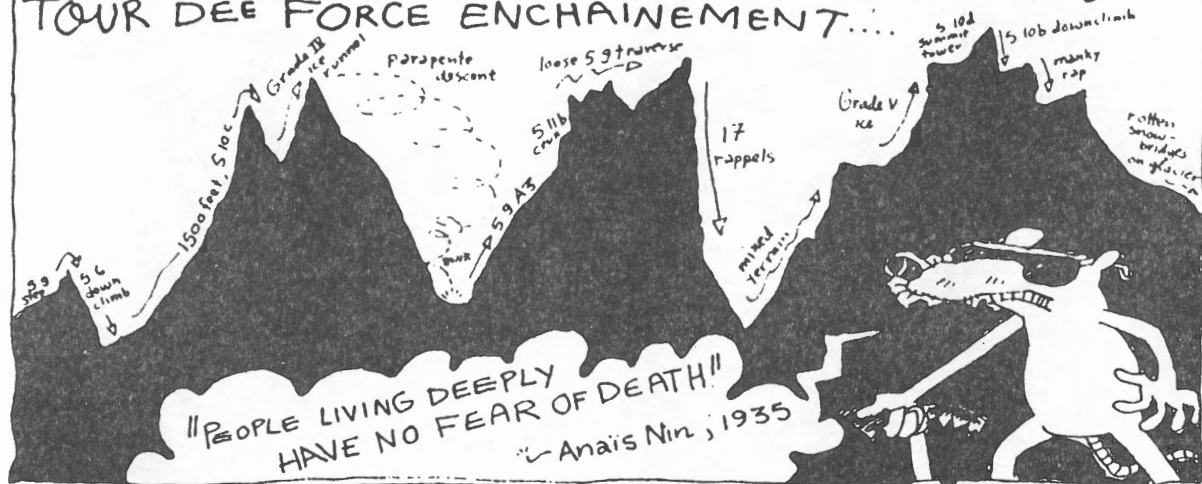
I'm hanging on only 1 fingernail,
Traversing fast, it's true,
I can only climb E3 these days,
My dear how about you?

Just very slightly mad!
And you can lead it.

-ROGER DIAMOND-

ROGER ...HYPERCONSCIOUS MASTER of the EXTREEM

AFTER AN IN-YER-FACE, UP-YER-BUM 22 hr; 32min, 59 sec.
TOUR DEE FORCE ENCHAINEMENT...



...ROGER INVOKES THE BILLLOWING SERAPHIMS OF INDECISIVE TORMENT !!!

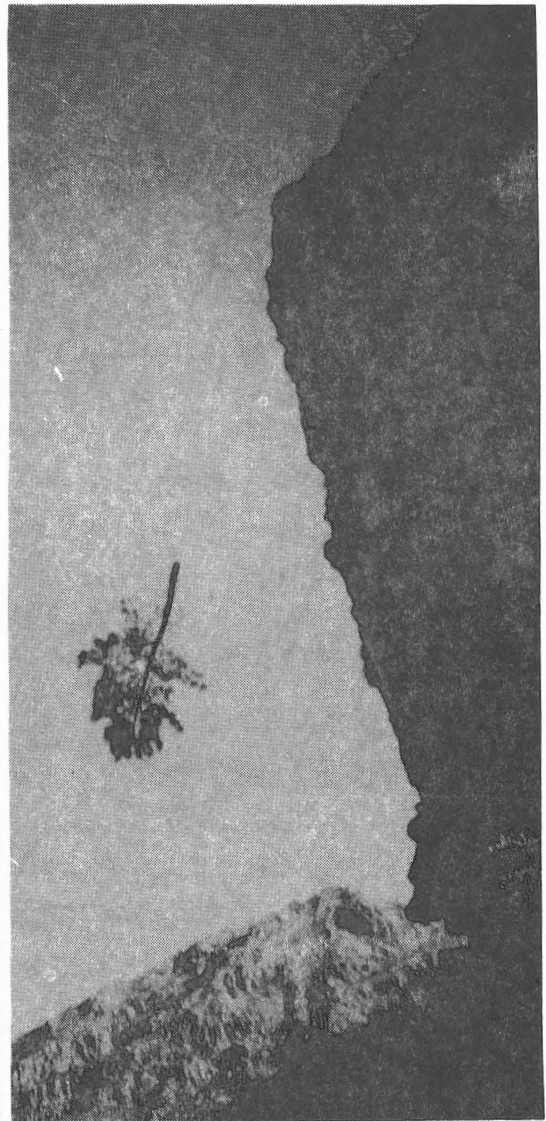
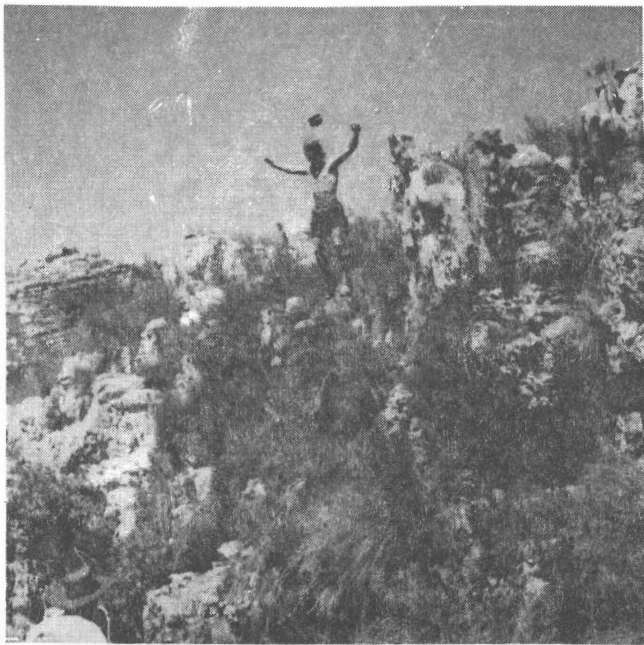


Cartoon: Tami Knight

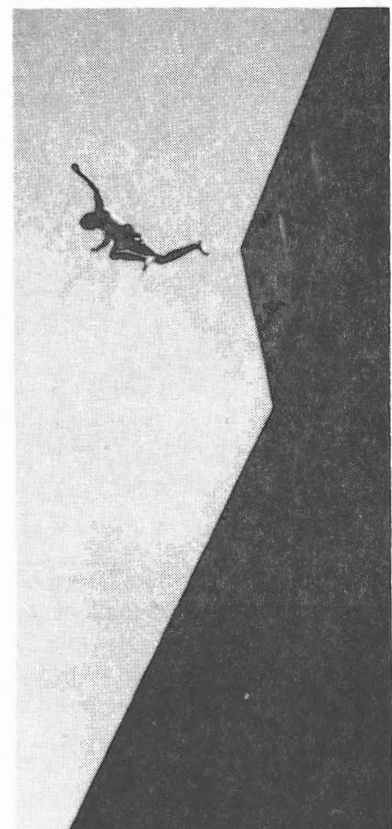
(cartoon from Climbing Mag, March 1996)... To Roger, the hyperconconscious master of the extreme...Thanks from all of us at UCT MSC for your excellent aaaction in the club...A job incredibly well done. To Jeremy whose not a little grey man...If you spend as many hours working as chairperson as you did writing articles for us-we have absolute faith in your success for the remainder of the year. To the committee: here's to raising the MSC to new heights...

From the Editor and Assistant Editor -
Sobonana!!!

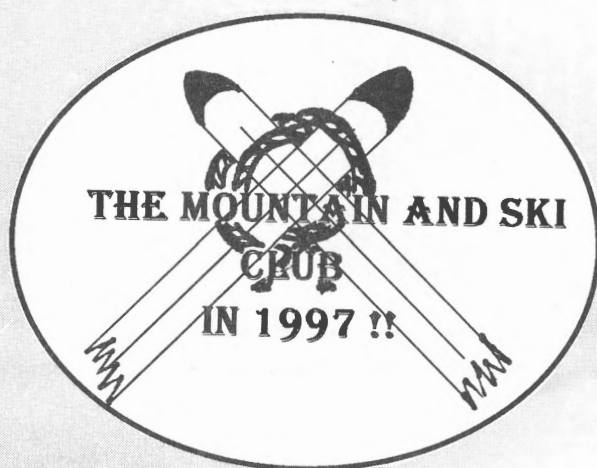
Ryan & Jenny



Take the Plunge...



**...HANG
AROUND...**



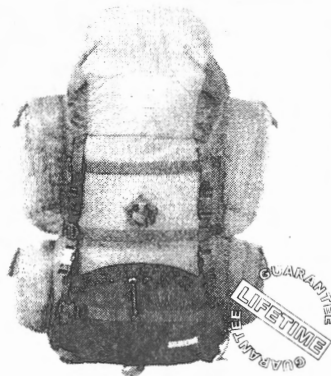
LADIES MILE



CANYON

Medium capacity 3-5 day trail pack
Capacity: 60 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 2,6 kg
Harness system: Advanced 5-Point
Lifetime Guarantee
Short-back design best suited
to ladies and people of average height

THE LEGEND



BOULDER 75

Large capacity 5+ day trail pack
Capacity: 75 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 2,7 kg
Harness system: Advanced 5-Point
Lifetime Guarantee
Full length back suited to taller people

THE GREAT TREK



BOULDER 85

Super capacity long trail pack
Capacity: 85 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 3,0 kg
Harness system: Advanced 5-Point
Lifetime Guarantee
The handy top flap pocket converts
into a hip pouch.

½ DOZ Reasons To Choose THE LEADER OF THE PACK

CLIMB HIGH



KRAKADOUW

Customized climbers pack
Capacity: 40 + 10 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 1,7 kg
Harness system: Airgomatic
Lifetime Guarantee
Features height adjustable
ice axe loops and crampon
attachment

ECONOMIST



RHINO

Medium capacity trail/expedition pack
Capacity: 55 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 2,6 kg
Harness system: Advanced 5-Point
Lifetime Guarantee
Side pockets available
as optional extras

THE WHOLE HOG



THAR

Adjustable capacity expedition pack
Capacity: 65 + 30 litres
Fabric: Duracore 1000N
Weight: 2,85 kg
Harness system: Advanced 5-Point
Lifetime Guarantee
Side pockets available
as optional extras

Trade Enquiries:
Backpacker Products
P.O.Box 43359, Salt River
7925 SOUTH AFRICA
Tel.(021) 510-6813 Fax.(021) 510-6820



Because of our commitment
to the environment
a percentage of each
Backpacker Product
purchased is donated to the
Worldwide Fund for Nature



Leader Of The Pack

GRANT SELLARS

30 Waterkant Street, 6th floor, Cape Town

STOCKISTS OF

Backpacker Hiking and Travel Packs

Pure Down and Hollowfibre

Sleeping Bags

extend greetings to U C T Mountain and Ski Club

Telephone 021 4191656



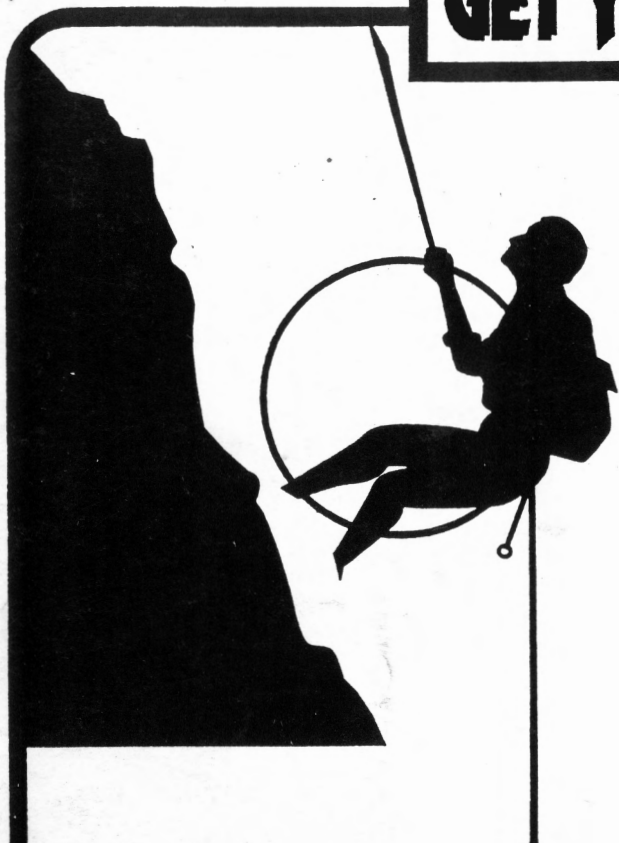
Salt River
Tent & Tarpaulin cc trading as:
Camp 'n Canvas
CK 91 / 16252 23

33 Salt River Road, Salt River
P O Box 2, Salt River 7925
Tel: 021 - 47 4919
Fax: 021 - 47 6923



Camping, Hiking and Mountaineering Safety Equipment
Sales and Repairs of all types of Canvas and Synthetic Protective Covers

GET YOUR GEAR FROM US



**Quickdraws
Shoes
Rocks
Friends
Hangers
Harnesses
Ropes
Chalk
Backpacks
Tents
and More!**

**COME TRAINING ON OUR INDOOR WALLS AT
CAPE TOWN AND BRAAMFONTEIN BRANCHES ONLY**

PETZL



boreal

troll

**Back
A packer**



**70 JUTA ST., BRAAMFONTEIN
TEL. (011) 403-1354**

**271 SCHOEMAN ST., PRETORIA
TEL. (012) 322-7464**

**6 PEPPER ST., CAPE TOWN
TEL. (021) 23-2175**

**15 STANHOPE RD., CLAREMONT
TEL. (021) 61-8839**

CAMP AND CLIMB

EXPERTISE THROUGH EXPERIENCE